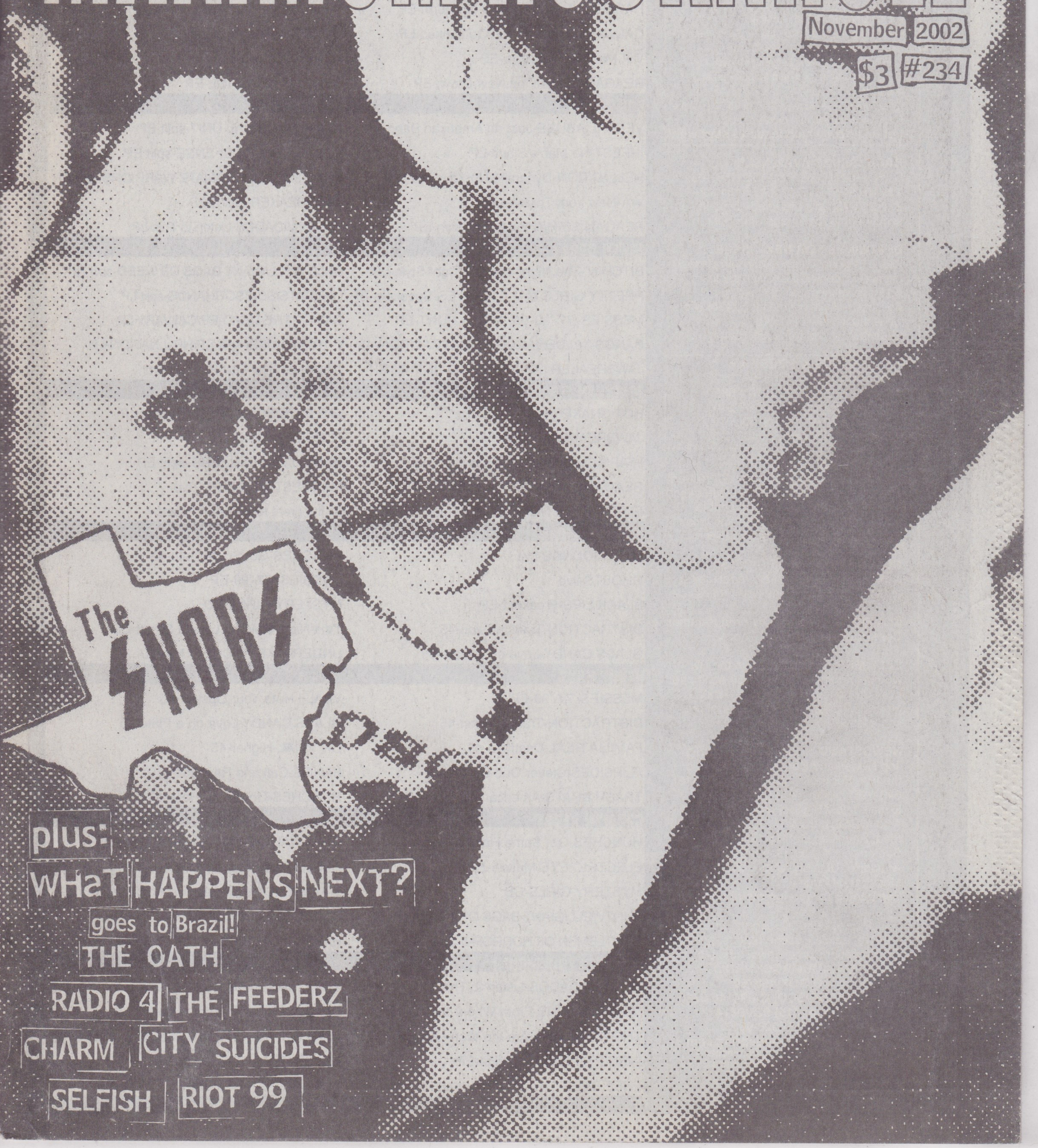
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

November 2002

$3 #234



The SNOBS

plus:

WHaT HAPPENS NEXT?
goes to Brazil!

THE OATH

RADIO 4

THE FEEDERZ

CHARM

CITY SUICIDES

SELFISH

RIOT 99

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

SAIRAAT MIELET-Extended Plays-LP	XFILESX/SELF DEFENSE-split EP
HASKELS-Taking the City by Storm-EP	SONICS-Fire & Ice-LP
CALVARY-Outnumbered/Outflanked-LP	INFEST-No Man's Slave-LP
V/A-Mie City Hardcore-EP	KORO-700 Club-EP
REAGAN SS-Hail the New Dawn-EP	GENETIC CONTROL-EP

ROB COONS

VERBAL ABUSE-Just an American Band-CD	RAMBO/CRUCIAL UNIT-split EP
INFEST-No Man's Slave-LP	XFILESX/SELF DEFENSE-split EP
HELLNATION-Dynamite Up Your Ass-LP	KUNG FU RICK/ULTIMATE WARRIORS-split EP
V/A-New York Thrash-LP	JAWBREAKER-Etc.-2xLP
REAGAN SS-Hail the New Dawn-EP	LOS OLVIDADOS-Listen to This-LP

ARWEN CURRY

BITCHIN'-The Night Life, the Tight Style-LP	SHOTWELL/GIANT BAGS OF WEED-split EP
PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES-Speakers-EP	LAB RATS/SCISSORHANDS-split LP
MESSIES-'77-'99-EP/WITCH HUNT-EP	DAY OF THE DEAD-EP/CALVARY-LP
BANGS-10"/DEFIANCE-LP/DISTRACTION-45	E-150/ZANUSSI-split EP/HELLNATION-LP
JAWBREAKER-Etc.-2xLP/FIELD OF FIRE-EP	Ataranjuat (The Fast Runner)-film

JONATHAN FLOYD

HOT SNAKES-live	LAB RATS/SCISSORHANDS-split LP
JAWBREAKER-Etc.-2xLP	FLIPSIDES-Clever One-LP
I-FARM-Two Collected Works-CD	RAMBO/CRUCIAL UNIT-split EP
REAGAN SS-Hail the New Dawn-EP	MANIFESTO JUKEBOX-live
BITCHIN'-The Night Life, the Tight Style-LP	All the great reissues and boots

JEFF HEERMANN

LOST SOUNDS-live	HUNCHES-Got Some Hate-45
GHOSTS-live	MESSIES-'77-'99-EP
BLACK LIPS-Freakout-EP	MYSTERY GIRLS-CD
DISTRACTION-Transmission-45	TVH-Night Raid on Lisbon Street-CD
GLASS CANDY-Love on a Plate-45	UNDERTAKERS-Crucify Me-CD

KENNY KAOS

MESSIES-'77-'99-EP	VEAL-I Hate Your Lipstick-45
DISTRACTION-Transmission-45	GLASS CANDY-Love on a Plate-45
FAMILIA REAL-Destruye-45	ON TRIAL-Higher-45
FLIPSIDES-Clever One-LP	BANGS-Call and Response-10"
TRASH BRATS-American Disaster-LP	HUNCHES-Got Some Hate-45

CAROLYN KEDDY

HUNCHES-Got Some Hate-45 & live	LIMBONAUTAS-CD/ TVH-Night Raid-CD
ELECTRIC EYE-Muscle-EP	24 Hour Party People-film
MYSTERY GIRLS-CD	V/A-Rip Off , the Singles Second Strike-LP
SHOTWELL/GIANT BAGS OF WEED-split EP	SCIENTISTS-both LPs
GENTLEMEN OF HORROR-5 Song-EP	BASEBALL FURIES/HOSPITALS-live

DULCINEA LOUDMOUTH

LOS OLVIDADOS-Listen to This-LP	YDI-A Place in the Sun-EP
DRUNK INJUNS-From Where the Sun-LP	DISTRACTION-Transmission-45
THE WORST-We Are the Worst-EP	MOONEY SUZUKI-Oh Sweet Susanna-45
INSULTS-I Carry a Badge-EP	BLACK KEYS/SOLEDAD-live
FREE BEER-The Only Beer that Matters-LP	BLACK LIPS-Freakout-EP

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- US Rate: $3 each. 6 issue sub for $18, 12 issue sub for $30. In California, send $19.49 for 6 months or $32.55 for 12 months (tax).
- Canada: $4 each (air) or $3 (surface). 6 issue sub for $24 (air) or $18 (surface). (US dollars)
- Mexico: $4.50 each (air) or $5 (surface). 6 issue sub for $27 (air) or $30 (surface).
- Western Europe: $8 each (air) or $4 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $24 (surface).
- Japan, Australia, New Zealand: $9 each (air) or $4.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $54 (air) or $27 (surface). (US dollars)
- Everywhere else: $8 each (air) or $5.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $33 (surface).

Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE: Back issues #148, 150-155, 156-163, 166, 169-170, 172-175, 177-181, 184-211, 213-233 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $30
1/3 page long: (2 3/8" x 10") $85
1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $100
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $150
Full page (7 1/4" x 10") $400

AD CRITERIA: We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads properly sized on paper.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible.

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NEWSSTAND circulation through Big Top Newsstand Services, a division of the IPA. For more information call (415) 643-0161 or fax (415) 643-2983 or E-mail: Info@BigTopPubs.com.
Also available from: No Idea, Sound Idea, Revolver, Get Hip, Smash, Subterranean, Last Gasp, See Hear, Armadillo, Ubiquity, Choke Inc, Desert Moon, and Marginal.
See page 5 for foreign distribution info.

Please send all records, zines, letters, articles, scene reports, photos, subscriptions, interviews, ads, etc., to:
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PO BOX 460760
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Phone (415) 923-9814
Fax (415) 923-9617
maximumrnr@mindspring.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes.

RAY LUJAN

LOS OLVIDADOS-Listen To This-LP
FLIPSIDES-Clever One-LP/LOVEJUNK-CD
OVER IT-Timing Is Everything-CD
KILLEREST EXPRESSION-Four Days-CD
JAWBREAKER-Etc.-2xLP
PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES-Speakers-EP
STARING BACK-On-CD
LONG TALL SHORTY-Completely-2xLP
HOMETEAM-Time And Place-CD
STITCHES-You'd Better Shut Up-LP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

JAWBREAKER-2xLP/TOTAL SHUTDOWN-EP
CALVARY-Outnumbered/Outflanked-LP
RAMBO/CRUCIAL UNIT-split EP
S.O.B.-Symphonies of Brutality-LP
XPOZEZ-Democracy-EP/REAGAN SS-EP
NIGEL PEPPER COCK-The New Way-LP
PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES-Speakers-EP
LOS OLVIDADOS-LP/FREE BEER-LP
DRUNK INJUNS-LPs/R'N'R-I've Had It-45
XFILESX/SELF DEFENSE-split EP

WILLIE NELSON

SICARII-LP/AGITATED-CD
WITCH HUNT-EP & live
RAMBO/CRUCIAL UNIT-split EP
WEAVING THE DEATHBAG-Weaving-EP
LAB RATS/SCISSORHANDS-split LP
E-150/ZANUSSI-split EP
DEXTER CHUMLEY ATTACK-Death in Small-EP
SIDA/DESTRUCCIÓN-split EP
SOOTHE-EP/GEHENNA-live
NIGEL PEPPER COCK-The New Way-LP

DONNA POOLE

DONNA HAS BETTER THINGS TO DO

BRUCE ROEHRS

ANTISEEN-Blood of Freaks/Drastic-EPs
HAMMERLOCK/BP. Psychos-live/S.O.B.-LP
XFILESX/SELF DEFENSE-split EP
RETALIATOR/BAKERS DOZEN-split LP
RAMBO/CRUCIAL UNIT-split EP/KORO-EP
XPOZEZ-Democracy-EP/HEADHUNTERS-EP
PREKELE-No Shame CD/ROUSTABOUTS-CD
V/A-Mie City Hardcore-EP/DEVIL SKINS-EP
COMRADES-CD/THE WORST-EP
V/A-Brewed in Sweden Vol. 2-CD

MIKE THORN

RAMBO/CRUCIAL UNIT-split EP
V/A-Mie City Hardcore-EP/CALVARY-LP
E-150/ZANUSSI-split EP/DEFIANCE-LP
LAB RATS/SCISSORHANDS-LP/EXECRADORES-EP
WEAVING THE DEATHBAG-EP
DEXTER CHUMLEY ATTACK-EP//SICARII-LP
SIDA/DESTRUCCIÓN-split EP/BESTHÖVEN-EP
GREAT CLEARING OFF-EP/INFEST-LP
MANIFEST JUKEBOX/DEADFALL-live
JAG-OFFS/4 LETTER WORDS-split LP

RYAN WELLS

GENTLEMEN OF HORROR-5 Song-EP
X-At Home With You-LP
BLACK LIPS-Freakout-EP
LOS OLVIDADOS-Listen to This-LP
VEAL-I Hate Your Lipstick-45
QUEEN COBRA-LP
BUTTHOLE SURFERS-Humpty Dumpty-LP
DISTRACTION-Transmission-45
MOONEY SUZUKI-Oh Sweet Susanna-45
LOST SOUNDS-live

ZINE TOP TEN

Avow #12
The Conspiracy #1
Reason To Believe #6
Escape From Worcester #1
Multikid #2
Snakepit #2
Food Geek #5
PTBH #10
Rocktober #33
Icing #1

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#155/Apr '96. "Holy Bible" issue. Hockey Teeth, Turnips Surfin, Pussy Crush, Cro Mags, High Plains Drifters, Slight Slappers, Third Degree, Anti-Flag, Knights of Malta.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Dropout, Society Gone Madd, Pinhead Circus, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Useless ID, Quarantine.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City , Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#228/May '02. Three Summers Gone, Haymaker, Killed In Action, 31G Records, Cheetah Chrome, Stardumb Records, This Computer Kills, Isso*Keh, Strong Intention, Desobediencia Civil, Custic Christ, Lack of Knowledge.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct. '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

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Dear *MRR* readers…

Below you'll find a list of distros in Europe who have taken up the slack since our departure from Mordam. We've been doing our best to cover as much of territory outside of the U$A as we can, but we still need your help in establishing contacts with like minded punx who are willing to help us out. We're providing this list to you in order to let you know where you can currently get your monthly fix of *MRR*… but we're always looking for more help; so if you do a distro, would be interested in selling *MRR* at shows, or just going in with a crew of friends to get a cheaper post rate—get in touch and we'll tell you the details! Any and all help is very much appreciated. Please also note that Assembly Line is now offering a subscription service for the UK, cheap! This is just the beginning…thanks again for all your support…

Arwen, Mike, & Clara

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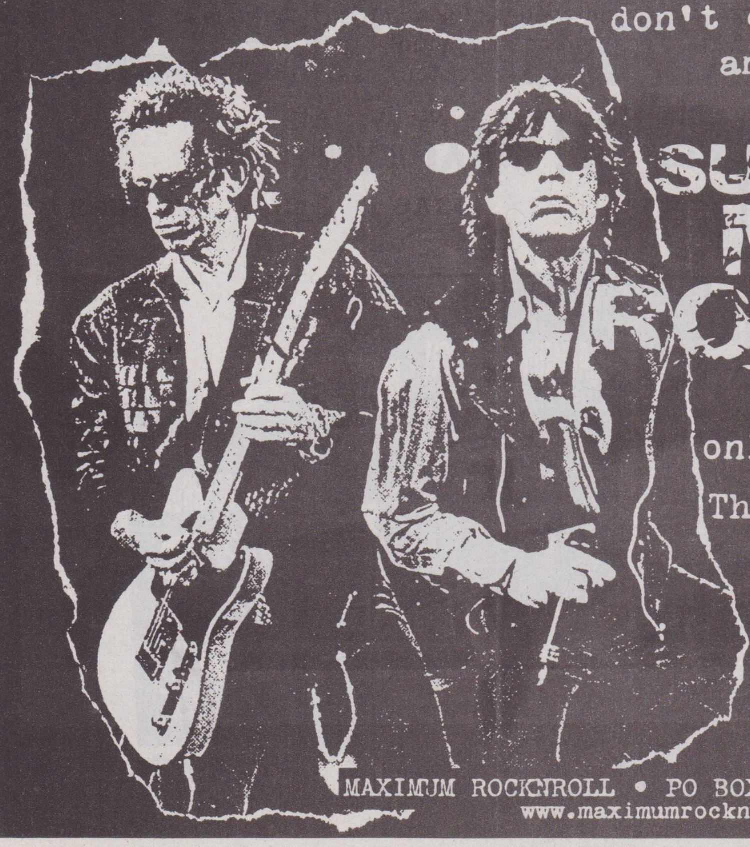

don't end up old, pathetic and out of touch like these chumps…

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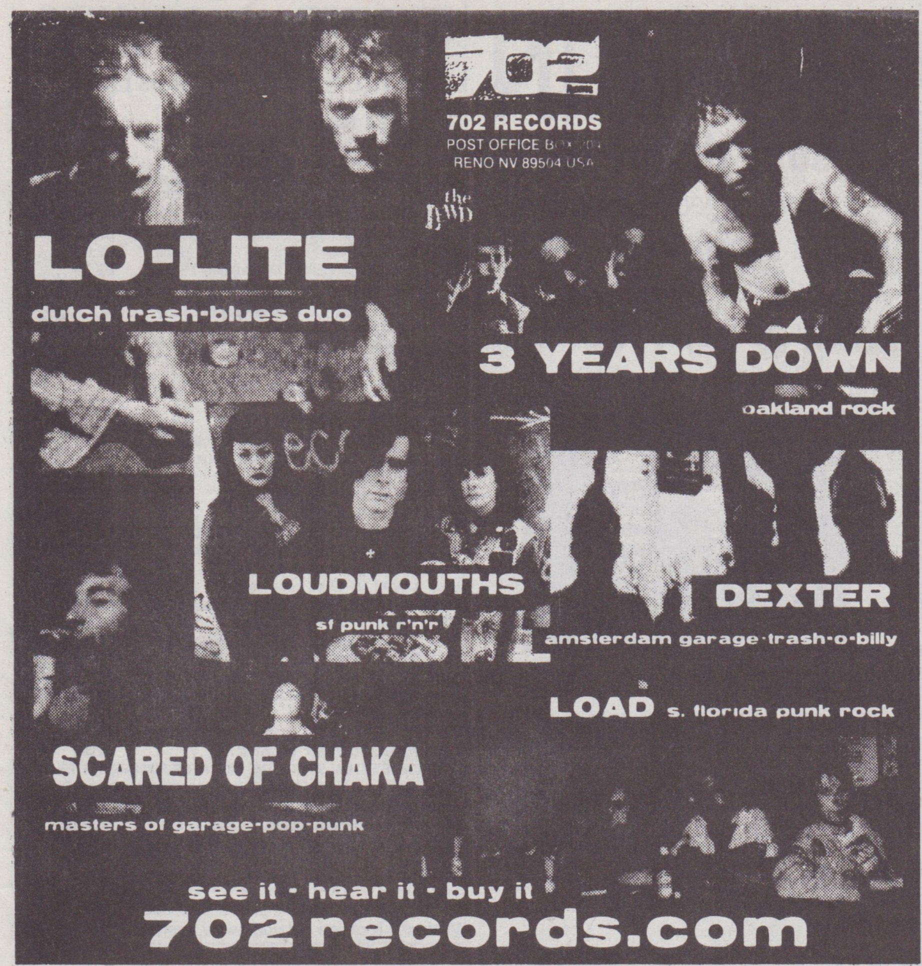

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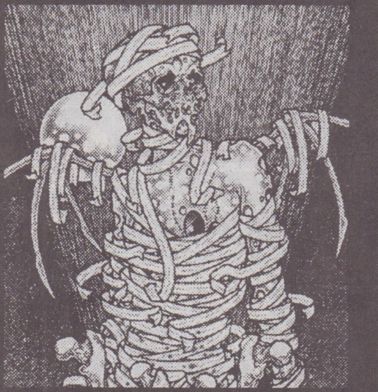

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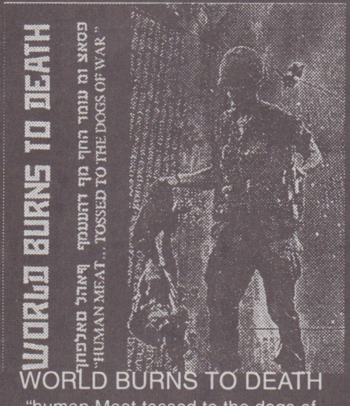

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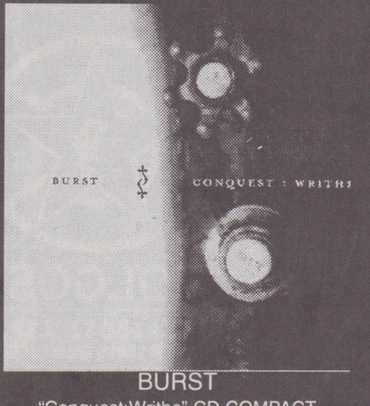

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LETTERS

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Maximum Rocknroll -

"I think that the people of the United States have no idea what is happening outside the US. The news they see does not inform them about what is happening," Martin Moyano a resident of Buenos Aires, the capitol of Argentina, speaking at a popular assembly meeting on a warm summer night in February, 2002. How many stories have major media outlets run on the poor or the unemployed in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil... How many stories about the pensioners and the ex-middle class who can't get their due or their money out of the bank - US banks?

The most censored and ignored story of the last—and the next—five years must be: "Global Economy Caters to US Addictions." Half of the world's problems are caused by the US addictions to oil and all kinds of drugs. The illegal drug trade is the second largest sector of the global economy—if you included all the legal drugs that US citizens are addicted to "drugs" would be the largest sector by far. The global petroleum market is the third largest sector of the world economy. The US is the largest consumer of oil and its economy is so fragile and oil-dependent that it relies on a dangerous militarism to maintain reliable supplies. Consumption of fossil fuels to support US-type lifestyles is the underlying cause of global warming, ozone depletion, polar ice cap melt and mass specie die-off. The largest sector of the world's economy is the military and arms sales. The US has always dominated this market and typically controls more than half of global arms sales with a majority of these sales to less developed nations. The US uses these commodities as carrot, stick and as profitable enterprises to sustain its military industrial complex. The US spends half the world's defense budget, perhaps three-quarters of the whole budget if private security costs are included.

The three main sectors of global trade serve US addictions and are self-reinforcing. US "Drugs,"US "Guns"and a US needy for oil. This situation cannot continue on much longer, and then what? Save Colombia, save society and US morality—legalize drugs *and de-militarize US foreign policy in the South.* "Divide up the land and multiply the bread,"
- A girl in Puerto Alegre, Brazil, at the World Social Forum

Dear *MRR,*

I'd like to announce my Punk Rock Theorem. With the potential importance of Einstein's Special and General Theory of Relativity, Darwin's Theory of Evolution and the Copernican Revolution. In keeping with Einstein's intention of his theorem being able to fit onto a T-shirt, I now present you the definitive, end all and be all, answer to those late-coffee filled nights, where one agonizes over just how punk they really are.

One's involvement in the punk scene is directly, and irremovably relative to the amount of time one spends in the post office.

I thank you for your time,
Dustin Neuman /
Dreadedcrustpunk@aol.com

PS In the interest of public decency, I request that Bruce Roehrs be restricted to five "Fuck Yeah"s an issue.

MRR / Jake Filth-

This email is in response to your 4am Fatality 7"review in the October issue. Thanks for the taking the time to review the record and although the review itself was somewhat decent, and the reviewer complimented my lyrics, I personally took offense to the bullshit label of "jockcore"to describe the music. Fuck that shit! To set the record straight, 4am Fatality is NOT fucking "jockcore." We are not mindless fucking jocks and the "insightful, thoughtful" lyrics should've clued you in on that. To pigeonhole us to a genre of punk I personally despise is simply childish... and could keep kids who might otherwise dig the record from picking it up. And on what basis do you consider us "jockcore?" Because we don't play as fast as other "thrash" bands? Because we aren't "hardcore" enough for you, or "punk" enough for you? I bet if we looked like vogue punx with mohawks and studded belts you wouldn't have called us "jockcore!"

One of the reasons I take such offense is because I'm no "rookie" (pun intended since we're on the jock theme) to punk rock. I'm 31yrs old and have been active in punk rock since the age of 15, either through 'zines, booking shows, playing in bands, distro, etc. And have always made a fucking effort to remain DIY by choice, not force. If I was some stupid fucking jock I wouldn't still be doing this and putting records for the love of it. So next time you wanna label a band with one of your "clever" titles *not* because of their lyrics but because of their *music* (which is as ironic as it gets) think twice because you have no fucking clue what that band might really be about. And if you reviewers are starting to get burnt out or feel grumpy about reviewing so many records (you poor things) then don't fucking do it!! Reviewers need to be more mindful of what they're doing. Tagging bands with silly bigoted labels doesn't help anybody. Okay, enough bitching for now. Labels who like to trade contact me, those who don't fuck off. You can reach me at: Villain Records, PO Box 82172, Las Vegas, NV 89180-2172. Email: villainrecords@yahoo.com.

Hatefully,
Villain

Dear punks,

As of Wednesday 28th of August 2002, D.S.-13 (a.k.a. Demon System 13) has ceased to exist as a band. The break-up is final. There will be no new record. We will do one last show in the western world: The annual Punkfest here in our hometown Umeå (Sweden), 14th to 16th of November. For info, go to www.umeahardcore.org. After that we will do the Japan tour w/Bleed For Pain that HG Fact is organizing: 24th of November to 1st of December. And that's it kids. Show's over. Go home. D.S.-13 is most definitely over. The reasons behind the split are personal and are of no concern to anyone outside the band. So please do not write and ask "what happened."

The release of the collection CD *No One is Going to Thank You When You are Dead* on Deranged will go ahead as planed. This will be our final release and it should be out early October.

During these six years as a band we made a decent amount of enemies, but we also made shit loads of friends all over the world. We want to thank all of you who supported us, helped out and spread the word. What started as a joke amongst a bunch of bored and frustrated friends, managed to do more than any of us ever thought possible. Two U.S. tours, three European tours, countless mini-tours across Sweden, seven 7"EP's, two albums, tapes, compilation tracks. And now a tour of Japan. Thanks to all of you who made all of this possible.

Busted Heads Records & Distro will carry on as usual. www.ds13.com will be up and running for some time, so the label and distro will continue to be based at this address. It will eventually get a website of its own, but all in due time. Thank you to all our friends, you know who you are. Fukk you to all our enemies, you know who you are. Stay hardcore.

Fredrik Jonsson a.k.a. Tom Terror, Jonas Lyxzén a.k.a. Jånte D-Kay, Christoffer Jonsson a.k.a. 138, Andre Sandström a.k.a. Andy Anarchy/ Box 275/ 901 06 Umeå/ Sweden

Dear *MRR*,

I'm so sick and tired of punks running around not looking like punx... what a bunch of fucking tools, right? What are you so fucking afraid of, ya posuer?! I'm so fucking sick of this shit with punx looking like they shop at the fucking Gap! C'mon let's see more studs, more spikes, more crazy hair cuts and more kids looking like complete and utter freaks! Show a little extra effort people, cause it does fucking matter! Stay drunk—stay punk!

—Jonnie Puke

MRR—

Does anyone know what it is like to live in a small town and be a punk rocker at the same time? I've lived in the coal regions of northeastern Pennsylvania my whole life. I have seen nothing. Being "punk" and having beliefs that don't fit in with small town ideals do not mix. One great example is vegetarianism/veganism. Most people around here look at you funny if you tell them you do not eat meat.

One other example is music. I don't know many people that listen to "punk" outside Blink 182 or Green Day. There are older folx who dug Misfits and Dead Kennedys back in the day. The point I'm making is that it's hard to live. Nobody I associate with is, was or ever will be "punk." I don't have anything against any of these people, but it's weird talking to folx about issues like the environment or animal rights.

The sense of conformity is so strong, it makes me sick. You can tell a person's hometown by the way that they dress. What's worse is that these towns are so close together, a person passing through or outside the area would not be able to tell the difference between neighboring towns aside from distance. You could walk outside and see the same people hanging out at the same place doing the same thing at the same time every day. Don't get caught being different, people might laugh at you or worse yet, no one will let you forget "what" you are. It's even worse when the cops target you. Suspicious looking kids are on drugs and a threat to "our community."

Recreational activities are a laughing matter. Loitering is prohibited to youth in this place. Certain towns let you hang out, but for the most part it's illegal around here. Basketball nets get torn down as well as elimination of playgrounds for the use of parking lots. There is an ongoing joke about this place becoming a parking lot. Buildings getting torn down because they become dilapidated over the years. I've seen game rooms come and go. After two years they get shut down. These places attract kids. Kids rarely have money to spend with the exception of alcohol, tobacco, and the drug of choice at the time. People who run game rooms are "in business" to make money, not baby sit. There are only two times a year where someone can "legally" loiter. The home games at the football field and the annual block parties in the summer. They usually lose their magic at about age 16. The biggest, most exciting thing to do is drive around, get high, go to the bar, make babies. Take your pick. I rarely partake in any of these activities.

What about those of us that don't drive? You're shit out of luck, thumb a ride, find a girl/boy friend or become a hermit. I had my driver's permit twice now. I'm not even ready to get my license. I'm 22 years old. My mode of transportation is my bike, besides my thumb. As I mentioned earlier, the surrounding towns are close together, but anything worth anyone's time is about 10-15 miles on the bike—one-way.

The police are a threat to anyone who drives. They are just as bored as the kids. Cops in my town, Lansford, are well known within 36-40 miles of here. Landsford has the most crooked police force. Search and seizure is ridiculous. You can get searched by just walking down the street in the sight of a bored cop. I'll tell you a story some other time. You can get pulled over for the dumbest things in this town. Cracked tail lights is probably the best example. If your car is not picture perfect, you're done. I don't drive a car, so I can't really explain many things about getting pulled over. I will say that the cops *will* follow you until you do screw up. Take warning.

The "fuck-it" attitude. This is one place where the "fuck-it"attitude takes full effect. The town is cluttered with trash. See that can across the street? That's a decoration. That's there to make the borough look like they're doing their job. Throw your trash in the hedges, down the sewer, openings in the street or where you want. I get sick of telling people about picking up trash. Kids in this town are blind for "the loitering prohibition" (as

I call it). The few kids that ruined the parks, the noise on the corners in front of people's houses and any thing that could create attention. Burn people for money, stab people in the back, it's a way of life. Who cares who gets hurt, as long as you feel good tonight, nothing matters tomorrow.

The reason for writing this column is because I want to let people know why I want to move. I am planning a move to the Bay Area/East Bay in the summer of 2003. I want to be a part of a so-called scene. A scene where I can belong and feel some pride. A place where you don't see the same old faces every day doing the same boring stuff. I could start a Food Not Bombs or a band, maybe even a record label.

So why don't I stop whining about how my life/town sucks? Nobody would take anything serious, and everything flops and like-minded people "escaped,"while the escaping was good. People are too concerned with working their lives away, making big money for their dream houses or that fat bag of coke down 5th Street in Philadelphia. I sure as hell could not do anything by myself. All my friends are married, getting married, have "good jobs" making $13.00 an hour or working on their second kid. I am partially free.

All y'all from the Bay Area/East Bay write me. I need to make some friends out there so I know someone. I'm also looking for J-Church Records. I'd like to make a "boxed set"or an ultimate collection. Peace out!

Stu Love/ 240 E. Kline Ave./ Lansford PA 18232

Dear *MRR* / Jen Angel / Mykel Board,

First of all, I thought it was a little bit unusual to have a response to a column before even getting to the column in question. Jen seemed to make some good points and is obviously a thoughtful, intelligent person. So I went into Mykel Board's column (*MRR* 233) with an opinion already formed. But after reading it I was left wondering "what's to be so offended at?" (One of the few times I've ever thought that about something Mykel has said.)

C'mon Jen. The main brunt of criticism was at the scene itself. (The zine scene & the hacker scene in this case, but it translates to the punk scene in many ways.) I didn't get a bad impression of the conference or of its organizers. In fact, although I'm not a "zinester" (hate that word) or a hacker, I'm now a little more curious to witness these kind of events myself after hearing Mykel's accounts.

But, Mykel! "Colored person?" "Negro?!" really! I *know* you love to get people's goat, and your points were well taken. But honestly, using those terms, as the old white (pedopheliac *[sic?—ed.]*) man that you are, is *completely* out of line. Do I even have to explain why?

So Jen, Mykel, *MRR*, you're all full of shit. But I love you guys.

Paul Curran/ PO Box 190054/ SF, CA 94119

PS When Vince Horner crossed the border of good taste into East Germany and pissed off the whole East German scene with his record reviews, man, that was *totally* uncool!

Dear *MRR*,

Here's some more news blurbs on the "War on Terrorism" (well, that's what they call it) here in the US. A few months back an Indian film star and a bunch of her family and friends flew from Dallas to NYC. As the lights of the city became visible, they pointed out the windows at the various buildings and sites they were excited to visit. Too bad for them, they spoke in a language native to south India. A fellow passenger became quite upset by this, and imagined that they were discussing the destruction of the city and passing notes between them about their heinous plot. A year ago if one observed such behavior and reported it to a flight attendant, what would have happened? Under the War For Xenophobia, the call went up the chain of command until F-16 fighter planes were summoned and they followed the flight until it landed. In reality, the people on the flight were in much more danger from trigger-happy Air Force pilots than from Indian film stars. The Indians were detained for four hours, despite it quickly becoming obvious to state apparatus on the ground that they were harmless. The actor told the media that her advice to Indians flying in the US is to sleep the entire flight, don't speak or even read.

In September in Georgia, a woman was dining in a Shoney's when she became alarmed at the conversation she overheard at a nearby booth. As the men doing the talking were Middle Eastern, she called the police and their car was stopped in Florida. The cops told the media that the men were not cooperative and did not want their car searched! Fuckin' A right! Well the cops did search the car, brought in the bomb sniffing dogs, blew up their luggage, and closed the highway for fourteen hours. It turns out the men did nothing illegal. Good thing they didn't need their luggage! The police were not quoted as saying "racism in defense of extremism is no vice."

In unrelated Florida news, the governor's daughter was busted with crack cocaine in rehab! It was the second time she'd been caught with drugs there. The rehab people tried to convince the cops to let them handle it "in-house,"as being the governor's daughter carries no small amount of privilege. Last I read she had not been arrested and police were conducting an investigation. The young woman's uncle was a big-time cokehead before she was born, but was never arrested and now holds a prestigious position in the federal government. The uncle spoke at Yale University's graduation and told the kids that he was a C student and now he's the President! So do drugs and don't study (as long as you're already rich.)

—Ryan Thrasher

Dear *Maximum Rocknroll*,

Thursday, October 29, 2002. Henry Knowles, the original guitar play of the great Nardcore band Agression, died early this morning of leukemia. I talked to Blake Cruze of Stalag 13 today and he gave me the sad news. Blake was on his way up to San Jose to visit Henry when he got a phone call telling him it was too late. Understandably, he was quite shook up. I always considered Agression the most punk rock of all the Nardcore bands. They could be scary like all good punk bands should be. A big blow out memorial Nardcore show is planned for late October or early November in Oxnard. Henry was a good guy and this is very sad. I don't know what else to say. I'm stunned.

—Phester Swollen/ The Rotters

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CLASS PRIDE WORLD WIDE 2
Our second compilation is here, featuring all-new material from The Prowlers, Social Combat, Red Alert, NoGood Heroes, The Class Assassins, Pub All Stars, Bolchoi, Fuori Controllo, The Analogs, Fate 2 Hate, Jonny Gerriwelt, Signal 3, Garotos Podres, The Protest, Frontkick, Razzapparte, Wildcat Strike, Sick Sick Six, Charge 69, Fighting Chance, and the Angelic Upstarts.
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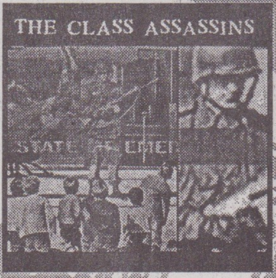

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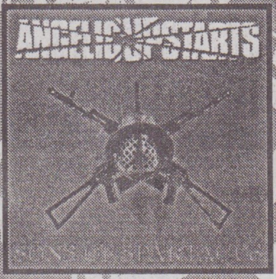

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oct 4 fri
Hellbillies,The Stiches (la,The Von Steins (la), Radio Vago (la)

oct5 sat
All Bets Off, Benumb, Playing Enemy (WA), Up Hill Battle, First Blood

Oct 6 Sun 5pm matinee
(B'fit for oct 22 coalition)
Yaphet Kotto, The Fleshies, Lesser of Two, Desmade Enorisis

Oct 11 fri
ExitWound, Lana Dagales, & more bands t.b.a.

Oct 12 sat
Ludicra, Watch them Die, Teen Cthulhu (WA), Carol Ann (Az), All Shall Perish

Oct 18 fri
The Influents, Solea (ex-Samiam), The Flipsides, The Mercy Mile (Redding), The Americas (Chico)

oct 19 sat
Scissorhands, Ten Grand (IL) & more tba

Oct 25 fri
Lady's Art Revival/Film Fest, films and bands, a mix, and tba

oct 26 sat Halloween Show
$1 off for non-punk Halloween costume. Iron Vegan, Hail Satan (Mercyful Fate covers), The Lord Weird Sloughfeg, Impaled

nov 2 sat
Dystopia, Ludicra, Brainoil, + one more tba

Nov 3 Sun 5pm
Plan 9, Scurvy Dogs, Man Alive (Isreal) +other bands tba

Nov 30 Sat
In Control, All Bets Off, Terror (la), (+ other bands tba)

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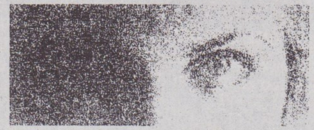

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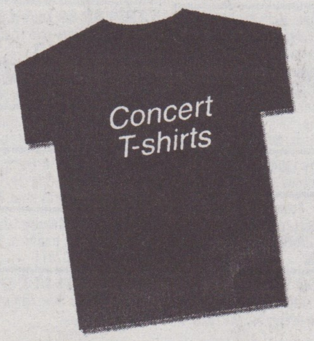

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CODE 13 Complete Discography 1994–2000 All the 7"s and comp tracks with one unreleased song. **HC 5001**

ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission Obedience Denial New band with members of Brother Inferior, Burnpile, and Subsanity. Fast punk/HC a lot like the later Brother Inferior material. **HC7026**

VITAMIN X People that Bleed Third 7" by this Dutch SEHC band. Fast HC sound similar to DS-13 or Life's Halt. Great political SE lyrics and high energy HC. **HC7025**

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NINE SHOCKS TERROR Mobile Terror Unit 7" EP Awesome raw fast thrash from Cleveland. **HC7022**

KAAOS Nukke Re-issue 1985 Finnish HC, classic stuff. **HC7021**

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DEMON SYSTEM 13 Aborted Teen Generation 7" EP U.S. press of this amazing Swedish hardcore band, fast aggressive powerful old-school hardcore. **HC7017**

CODE-13 A Part Of America Died Today 7" EP Third and best EP from Minnesota thrash punk defenders of the faith–twelve songs. **HC7016**

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TAMPERE SS SS Sotaa 7" EP More incredible Finnish thrash hardcore first released in '83. **HC7014**

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HEIST Pain Is Causing Life 7" EP Wicked fast and brutal HC in the Infest tradition. Second EP by this Australian thrash outfit. **HC7011**

DISTRAUGHT S/T 7" EP Brutal heavy hard-core from Brooklyn, NYC. New remixed second press with bonus track. **HC7010**

MURDERERS S/T 7" EP Legendary chaos punk/ HC. Manic HC-punk like Disorder, much more thrash than their recent stuff. **HC7009**

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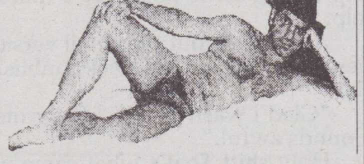
Expect a 2-week turn- around on record/CD orders and a 3–4 week turnaround on T-shirts, which are printed to order. Overseas orders, especially surface mail, will take much longer. Bullet belts are also available in the USA. You will need approx. 2 links for each inch of hip meas., available in brass, 30¢ each and chrome, 60¢ each.

COLUMNS

Mykel Board sez: YOU'RE WRONG!



Be careful that you don't become Truman Capote.
—My pal Lori

It's late. There are only a few of us on the platform. The Number 6 train. Heading downtown. I stand at the end of the platform, where the last car stops. That lets me off right at the stairs to Bleecker St. At the other end a bum dozes, stretched out face down on the hard concrete floor. Under the brightly lit sign that says *off-hours waiting area* a skinny young oriental hugs herself like it was cold in here. It must be 100 degrees, humid as a Bangkok night. But this girl folds her arms in front of her. Her hands stroke her triceps, as if to keep out an arctic wind.

I rarely practice my Japanese on strangers. Too often I get a hostile response in Korean or Chinese. This one's terrified. I'm afraid if I say anything to her, she'll scream. Maybe a more subtle approach. I'm not the subtlest person in the world, but I'll try.

I walk from my end of the platform. She glances sideways and takes a couple steps away. I see that in her wrapped arms is a book. A guidebook to New York. In Japanese. So desu!

"Anata-wa nihonjin desuka? (Are you Japanese?)" I ask. She smiles and nods her head. Her thin Japanese face has an almost perfect complexion... except for a small birthmark at the corner of her left eye. Her eyes are beautifully black, but they're hard to see, even under the harsh subway lighting. Are they red? Is she stoned?

"Doko-ni ikimasuka? (Where are you going?)" I ask further.

"Nihongo joozu! (Your Japanese is good)," she says.

The Japanese say that to anyone with the ability to say Sushi or Karaoke. I thank her just the same, then repeat my question.

"Yuu-nikui (that's difficult to say)," she says.

Now, I see that her eyes are wet. She catches me looking at them, blinks back the tears and turns toward me.

Then it gushes out. Way beyond my poor Japanese ability to understand. I ask her to stop, repeat, try other words. Eventually, I get it.

The sad tale is that her boyfriend, "a typical Japanese salaryman," came home drunk. Nothing strange there. He also came home smelling of "one of those kind of girls." She ran off.

"Ima, doko-ni ikimasuka?" I ask again.

"Wakaranai! (I don't know)," she says. "Bashoo mottenai. Okane mottenai. (I have no place. I have no money.)"

"Watashi-wa bashoo-to sukoshi okane motte. (I have a place and a little money)," I tell her.

She nods.

"Demo, anatano namae wakaranai (But, I don't know your name)" I say.

"Butako," she answers.

Flash ahead: We're both naked on my living room couch. Her head rests on my thigh. From her pale lips a little pink tongue darts out to the semen puddle on my stomach.

"Oishii!" she says lazily.

"So desu," I answer.

****

I made it up. All of it. There was no late train. No Japanese girl. No guidebook. I created it. Right out of my combed-over head. From nothing. Pow!

What power! I pull a girl out of thin air. Put her where I want. Get her to do what I want. Even make her disappear when I'm done with her. SNAP! She's gone.

Everyone has fantasies. Butako has walked through the dreams of millions. But writing shares the fantasy. Puts her in *your* mind as well as mine. Makes her as real as Paris... if you've never been to Paris.

Writing makes you a superman, gives you absolute power. You know what they say about absolute power. And therein lies the problem.

Journalists have to keep true to reality. They can't give someone a limp or a lisp if G-d didn't. They can't put an extra cloud in the sky. Their province is the outside world. The mundane day-to-day things that we call reality. At least *external* reality.

Ideas are also reality. Dreams and fantasies too, along with the whole rich unconscious and its unaccountable bursts through the brain barrier. But they are not the territory of the journalist. Just the facts, ma'am.

These fact-seekers give up the power to create in search of something called THE TRUTH. They only inform you of it, let you know it's there. They don't tell you what to do with it. Journalists count windows, they don't break them.

Yeah, there are sleazy journalists, hacks, sycophants. Maybe most of them. But a *real* journalist is interested in reporting THE TRUTH, wherever it may lead.

I am not a journalist. I don't want to give up my power in exchange for informing. Not even for an external TRUTH, no matter how large the capitals. For me, writing is not only the joy of breaking windows. It is the essence of creating something new.

Check out that guy over there. The one leaning against the window of the Swatch store. Nothing special, huh? A bland guy. Not ugly or good looking. Not tall or short. Just a blank white guy. Why should I settle for him? Why should you have to endure him just because it's *true?*

Let me put a mustache on him. An asymmetrical one, that hangs down to his chin—on one side. The other side is cut even with his lower lip. I'll give him thick glasses too. Maybe that's why he couldn't cut his mustache straight. He can hardly see.

Despite the glasses and lopsided mustache, there's something masculinely handsome about him. He's got a tan the color of a teacher's desk. His face is thin, with a Romanesque nose that forms a perfect 45 degree angle with his face. His dark eyes, magnified to Keane-painting size by his glasses, are pure and penetrating. Around those eyes: taut skin, not a wrinkle or an eyebag.

More interesting? Yep. Realer? I don't know.

Here's the conflict. My last column has apparently cost me another long-time friend. It's the third time, that I know of. There are probably more.

When I left for Mongolia, I had a goddess of a girlfriend. It had been the longest-lasting continual nookie relationship of my life. While in Mongolia, I wrote about my extremely limited sex adventures. When I returned to NY, I had no girlfriend.

Then there was a boy I've known since he was 16. There wasn't nearly as much sex as I would've liked, but our friendship lasted 15 years. Then I wrote about him. He thought what I wrote was unfair, inaccurate. He uses cocaine less than I do. He loves his girlfriend, pretty or not. That's not the way I told it.

After that, it ended. All 15 years of it, because of a few smudges of ink on paper. I haven't heard from him since.

Now, it's happened again. Last month I wrote about my adventures at the Underground Publishing Conference in Ohio. I called it the Underground Press Conference. The theme was: *Sharing our Tools, Refusing the Masters: Building Media Structures for a Better Future.* I said it was "Become the Media." I also wrote about the Hackers on Planet Earth conference in New York. I called it the 2600 Hackers Convention.

To show that truth, I took reality and bent it a bit. I had fun. I played. I let the power in the writing fingers loose on the key-

board. In doing that, I fucked up. I hurt someone who didn't deserve to be hurt. Worse than that, I changed some things that were important not to be changed... Worse than that, I didn't even check. Worse than that, I didn't care.

I am not a journalist. No one ties my hands to the pummel-horse of external reality. My anus is not greased with the lubricant of accuracy. But I do have a responsibility to my friends. I also have a responsibility to my readers. If some people miss the point. Okay, they're dumb. If the people I'm writing about miss the point, that's a problem.

My pal Lori, who's lasted more than 20 years with me... without either dumping or fucking me... always provides a part of her anatomy to cry on.

"I understand, Mykel," she says, "but you need to be careful. Don't be like Truman Capote."

"Huh?" I ask, "Why not? Except that he's dead. He had a good life. They made his books into movies. He had tons of little boys following him around. What's wrong with Truman Capote?"

"He had no friends, Mykel," she says. "He wrote about his friends and they left him. Just like that. They were gone. *You* don't care what people say about you, as long as they say something. Most people aren't like that."

She continues, "Most people don't want to see themselves in print, especially if it conflicts with how they see themselves in real life... More than that, especially if it conflicts with reality. It's telling a lie about someone. It hurts."

"But," I protest, "it's not a lie. It's just a deviation from the outside reality to show a larger truth."

"Tell it to Truman Capote," she answers.

Flash ahead: Lori asks me to help her fix her computer. She's afraid it's got a virus, and it starts slow anyway. After I work on it a couple hours, it won't start at all. I call Gateway tech... in Mississippi. I get this guy who sounds straight out of high school. His accent is so hick it makes Gomer Pile sound urbane. He's nice, well-meaning, but he doesn't know shit.

"Excuse me while I put you on hold," he tells me. "I have to look something up."

Dead silence... not even bad music.

"What's up Mykel?" Lori asks me, seeing my frustration.

"I got this hillbilly on the line," I tell her. "Musta just graduated from High School. I bet his whole family works there. His mom, his sister... they're probably the same person. At least he works on the phone, so he doesn't have to wear shoes."

The rural voice comes back on the line. "I put you on one-way hold," it says. "So I could hear if you had a question while I was doin' the research."

I feel like shit. Like the lowest scum. This poor shlub, workin' away at some minimum wage job in Mississippi, and here he is taking shit from me. I never met the guy. He could be a punk rocker. He could be the next GG Allin. But here's me, makin' him feel worthless. Making him hate me like the rest of America hates New York. Here's me who romanticizes desert life in Outer Mongolia, yet acts the perfect snob in inner Manhattan.

The only similarity to me and a journalist is a cliche. The press's job, they say, is to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. Like the press in reality, I find myself comforting the comfortable and afflicting the afflicted. Uh oh.

Am I caught in the eternal torment of the artist? Do I have to decide between being true to my art or keeping my friends? Nietszche and Van Gough went bonkers, let alone friendless, from keeping true to their art.

Or, am I being melodramatic? Especially with all that *art* crap. Maybe I should walk over and ask the guy leaning against the Swatch store. Not the guy I made up, but the *real* guy. The guy I fucked with.

"How do you feel about the mustache?" I ask him.

"What mustache?" he says.

I look at him again. It's gone. He's back the way he was before. No mustache. No glasses. His old boring bland self... Wait a minute. He's got a small pimple on his chin, just to the right of the cleft. His brown eyes have little flakes of green in them, nearly invisible unless you look carefully.

"What the fuck?" he asks. "Why are you looking at me like that?"

He still leans against the window. His left leg straight, locked at the knee. His right leg bent, the toes of that foot just resting on the ground.

Hey? I don't have to lie at all. This guy doesn't need a mustache or thick glasses. He's interesting on his own. I never bothered looking, because I could turn him into a clown with a few taps of the keyboard. I was lazy.

I was lazy in the same way when I wrote about my pal J in Los Angeles or the other J's in Bowling Green. It was too easy. Just a few taps of the keys. Paste on a mustache. Draw in thick glasses.

Worse, I didn't even get to the deeper truth I was looking for. In the earlier column I was saying where we live changes us, whether we like it or not. During Giuliani's New York, I've become less tolerant, more boring, more conventional. J has been in LA for awhile. He can't help the influence the city's had on him. But I *can* help turning him into a cliche. Just like I can help calling some poor guy a hillbilly, when he's just trying to help.

After I sent out the email version of the last column, I got a message from my pal Dick, publisher of the porn review zine BNI.

"Glad I wasn't there," he wrote about the UPC conference. "Sounds awful."

Holy shit! That's what came out of that? That's just plain wrong. I'm gonna throw myself in the East River. My criticisms were criticisms of the "alternative" scene in general. It's too self-contained. Too young. Too white. Too academic. Too focused on people with the time and money to ignore the evil system they're fighting against.

But those criticisms are minor compared to the benefits of the conference. Jen and Jason in Ohio should lay down naked on a pedestal and have their bodies tongue worshipped by everyone who has anything to do with alternative. The work they did was inspirational. Their achievement was much more towering than those two mini-buildings they called towers in their directions. It was an amazing, inspiring effort. Bringing together people from all over the country. Letting people know that the world is not just a pile of Starbucks.

The UPC was exhilarating. I might even publish my own next book thanks to ideas I got from that weekend. People from all over came together in extreme friendliness and tolerance. Sure there were problems, but the benefits outweigh them like Hulk Hogan outweighs Britney Spears.

The people I met: the crew from Chicago at the bowling alley, Jim Munro and Rich Mackin who I've known for a long time, Robb from NO, were some of the best people I've met... ever. If that didn't come through... I failed.

What can I say? I can only apologize to the J's I've misrepresented. In LA and Ohio and wherever else. I can also make a pledge. That when I talk about real people, I won't be lazy. If there's no mustache, I won't draw one on. If your eyesight is okay, I won't make you wear thick glasses.

So the big dilemma, the great artistic choice... true to my art or true to my friends... dissolves like the KY lubricating Truman Capote's teenage boys. It isn't a question of choosing. It's only a question of not being lazy. Of taking a second look. One more revision. One more click on the honesty meter.

Am I going to give up lying? Become a boyscout? Tell it like it is? Are you kidding? I'll tell the truth, always. Even when it conflicts with reality.

I'll still change reality a bit, too. I'll still create, using the power of writing to eat glow-in-the dark watches and shit nuclear missiles. I'll still take a walk in the mensroom of the Nomiso Bar to get to another dimension. The big change will be that I won't be lazy. Let's see if that's enough to keep me from ending up like Truman Capote.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—>*I'd like to see THAT research dept.*

The AP reports that the Los Angeles school district has halted distribution of a book about the Koran because its foreword calls Jews "illiterates who reject knowledge." Nearly 300 copies of the book, "The Meaning of the Holy Quran," donated by the Omar Ibn Al Khattab Foundation, were removed on Tuesday "for further review."

"We're going to talk to the foundation members and deter-

mine exactly why the commentary's there and whether there is research to support it," said Jim Konantz, a district official.

—>That'll scare 'em dept:

Hundreds of women blocked the gates of Chevron-Texaco and Shell offices in Warri, Nigeria on Thursday, Aug 8. This protest was the latest in a month of all-women demonstrations. Those protests began July 8 with a 10-day siege of Chevron-Texaco's offices in Escravos. The Escravos women, who ranged in age between 30 to 90 threatened to take their clothes off. They said public nudity would embarrass the expatriates among the terminal's workers and cause "a deep sense of shame" for many Nigerian employees. These tactics helped persuade Chevron to send senior executives to negotiate concessions. The company agreed to employ more local people, invest in electricity supply and other infrastructure projects, and aid the villagers in setting up poultry and fish farms to supply the terminal's cafeteria.

Now, if Andrea Dworkin really wanted to end pornography in America, she could easily use the same tactics. Threaten to take her clothes off?? I'd burn my entire collection of *A-Cup Cuties* to stop that from happening.

—>Favorite new terms dept: Here a couple terms that might be old fedora to my readers, but are new to me:

XEROX SUBSIDY: swiping free photocopies from the office, usually for zine production.

"I can charge a quarter for this zine. It was made on a Xerox subsidy."

SITCOMs: (Single Income, Two Children, Oppressive Mortgage)

What yuppies couples turn into when one of them stops working to stay home and play nursemaid to the kids.

"He's a real SITCOM. Back to the office after dinner, work till nine for overtime! eBay on the weekends!"

—>Here's an older one that I think Kesha sent me... maybe it was Ted:

The Persuasive Technology Laboratory at Stanford University, is where academics study technology designed to persuade people to alter their thoughts or behavior.

A doll they developed, called Baby Think It Over, encourages teens to change their attitudes about sex and pregnancy. Students carry a life-like vinyl baby programmed to have a distinct personality and cry at random intervals. The crying can only be stopped when its "parent" inserts a key into the control unit on the doll's back.

If this weren't bad enough, they have come up with their idea of the perfect persuasive technology: jealousy.com. The fictitious site—no relation to the actual www.jealousy.com, a website about Japan—greets jealous wives with provocative phrases like, "Do you know where your husband is?"

Once convinced of a probable infidelity, the suspicious spouse registers for a service that scans her husband's email for selected words, like "sex," "passion," and "kill." The service uses a Trojan horse that she sends to her husband in the form of an innocuous-looking e-greeting.

Every time her husband receives an email with one those words, jealousy.com intercepts it and delivers it to the broken-hearted wife. At the end of every month, they send her a bill.

Smash!

I was standing on the broad sturdy roof of a three-story factory building in east Boston, looking through the gray mist towards the lumbering blocks of skyscrapers downtown. For the first time in months, it was raining, and cool. The dead heat and oppression of summer had passed. I pulled my favorite sweatshirt closer around me, and inhaled the crisp Fall energy in the air. I shivered and stamped my feet on the gravel.

Another season, and the momentum builds.

I was with two other punks, two guys who I had seen at shows many times but didn't really know all that well, and we had just stepped outside to enjoy the view, rain or not, and take a break from helping out. I ate the peanut butter sandwich I had brought for lunch, and we talked about the usual. Just inside the roof door, in a large factory space, a motley crew of twenty or so other punks and hardcore kids were helping to build Boston's new all ages DIY venue, a place called Regeneration. People were doing all kinds of things simultaneously: washing the floors, painting the hallway black, cutting foam squares to put on the ceiling to absorb sound, laying down carpet on the stage, moving crap around, picking up trash, and poking through piles of used sound cords to find ones that looked good enough to use. Everyone was talking, and looking for what to do next. Ross was running around finding paintbrushes, paint and hammers, and generally organizing the semi-chaos. In the small room that quickly became Regeneration's office (where Ross sleeps on a small pull out sofa, and cooks on a very sketchy electric hot plate) Mary Jane was busy organizing booking schedules and paperwork. The place was buzzing.

It was only a couple of weeks before Regeneration's first (official) show, and although the hardest things had already been done, like building new walls on top of the original ones, and building a stage from the floor up, there were still a lot of things left to do.

After the three of us had absorbed the view from the roof and caught the fresh air, we went back in and helped with the stage. All I can say is that this stage is a thing of beauty. It is a good size: large enough to fit a band comfortably and for jumps and thrashing about without knocking everything down, but small enough so the whole band is still very much standing together. It's tall enough so that everyone in the room can see the band, but short enough so that it's only an easy short hop on or off stage. Perfect for that amazing chorus, when everyone can't help but run up front and sing along with the band. And, the whole thing was built by punks volunteering their time and tools. Pretty fucking cool. The stage doesn't even look like part of an abandoned tree house, or dip suspiciously in the middle. It is straight and level, and damn sturdy. The largest kids gave it a full on jumping test, and nothing fell off or even sagged a little. It held firm and solid. Kick ass.

To add to the coolness of it all, the stage was built while a show went on simultaneously in the next room. The venue for the RAMBO show fell through at the last minute, and rather than simply cancel the show and go home, people moved the show to Regeneration. While bands played on the other side of the wall, kids kept cutting lumber, measuring, and nailing shit together. And there it is. Beautiful. Better than a case of Brooklyn Lager in the fridge on Sunday.

On the day I was helping out, the carpet went on the stage. I was only doing a very small part, hammering carpet nails, fixing the carpet onto the floor, but it was the most fun I've had in weeks. Who would have thought?

"Smash! Smash! Smash!" went my hammer. Here's another nail for punk rock.

"Smash! Smash! Smash!" I could picture people jumping on the stage.

"Smash! Smash! Smash!" I could feel the heat of a hundred people screaming and dancing.

"Smash!" Being a small part of something big is a wonderful thing.

Perhaps I was a little overenthusiastic with securely fastening the carpet, making sure it wouldn't curl up the first time a guitarist jumped up and down on it. I was using plenty of nails, and Paul reminded me that it's not going to last forever. Shit, I hoped it would.

Regeneration is the stuff of Boston legend, an idea that so many people have talked about over too many beers for the last five years, an all ages DIY venue run by the punks, for the punks. Ever since the legendary Rat closed forever, when Kenmore Square was gentrified by BU and associates, Boston has had on-and-off-again luck with places for punk shows. Place after place stopped having all age shows, or punk shows at all, for one reason or another. It was becoming increasingly harder to book a reliable all ages show for a small touring band and local bands that wouldn't be shut down, out in the fucking suburbs, or need to draw 300 people to pay the club at the end of the night.

On tour, I would marvel at places like the Mr. Roboto Project right outside Pittsburgh, ABC No Rio in NYC, and Gilman Street in lovely Berkeley, CA. The shows had an intense

energy, and I got the strong sense that the spaces had so much more to offer than just music. There was a feeling of empowerment and ownership, expression, music, and art. It's hard to build that in a rented hall or a club where the rules are not yours and everyone packs up at the end of the night. I wondered why the hell we couldn't get something started in Beantown. There were plenty of punks and plenty of bands. It was a scene without enough places to gather.

For years, there was a string of benefit shows, everyone talked and talked about wanting to start a place, and, nothing happened.

And now, it's here.

All it took was a few motivated people taking the initiative, some research and digging, a bit of luck, and a lot of people helping out along the way.

As we all settled into 2001, getting used to the idea that Bush had gotten away with a fixed election, Regeneration first started to seriously come together. Ross Melee borrowed twelve dollars from a friend to buy a book about MA state non-profit laws, got a tattoo, and vowed that the place would happen. While Ross started work on getting a non-profit organization started, he teamed up with two friends, Sue Cat Woman and Paul Unseen.

Sue and Paul had been putting together benefit punk shows for a future Boston all ages venue for the last five years. After the millennium came and went without a new venue, we had joked it was all a scam, but Sue hadn't left town, and had saved the collected money and created an important little nest egg to get things started later on. That money paid for Regeneration's essentials like the sound system, building materials and first month's rent. By the summer of 2002, Ross had located a building in south Boston where the landlord didn't flinch when they said they wanted to start a youth center with punk rock bands. And, beyond belief, it was cheap, and near public transportation. Goddamn. The three of them signed a lease, Ross moved in, and construction began.

Only a couple of months ago, the place looked like a giant food cooler. It was a giant food cooler, and a factory that had made chocolate covered popcorn. The space is located at the very end of Mass. Ave. just past the Boston Medical Center and Dorchester neighborhoods. Right around the building, there isn't much going on. There is a food retail loading dock, a McDonald's, an electric supply store and two gas stations. Mostly, it's miscellaneous industrial businesses and factories. No one else is in the building in the evenings, so sound isn't an issue.

My first time there, Adam and I made the trek in the Profit van, and made it as far as the parking lot. We got out and checked the address again, then Adam and I started debating directions, and got in a fight if we should have taken a left somewhere. We were in front of a nondescript gray factory building with a huge loading dock, and the only sign in sight was for a rubber stamp operation on the second floor. No one was around, especially no punks, or our friends who had invited us to check the new place out. On the verge of leaving, we decided to just try doors. Adam thought he remembered something about a rubber stamp place, so it had to be around somewhere. We found a door propped open with a rock, which was a good sign, and went inside. There was nowhere to go except up the wide cement stairs, so we did that.

On the third floor, we found a big door that wasn't locked, and opened it.

"EEEEEEEE," a piercing alarm went off, sort of freaking us out, but I peaked in and yelled, "Hello?"

Sue came around the corner, and we had found the new home of Regeneration.

It was kind of a creepy place in the beginning: ugly, dirty-yellow-textured walls, bare cement floors, and thick plastic ribbons separating the main rooms, freezer-style. The idea of making the place into a DIY all ages space for shows seemed damn near impossible.

But there it is today. It's the coolest place ever. And the first show is happening this week. The fliers are up, and everything's ready to go. Teams of volunteers have shown up every weekend to help out and get the place ready, doing everything from washing windows to preparing the place to sound great. Everything glistens with a fresh coat of red and black paint, the toilets work, and artwork and posters are already springing up on the walls. You can tell as soon as you walk in, the place was built by punks who care about punk shows. Just to top it off, in the zine library, I found an ancient fourth issue of *MRR* and also the newest *Slug and Lettuce.* Everything a punk nerd girl could hope for.

Now as I wait for the first show to happen, I appreciate this moment of beginning, when anything seems possible for this place. Hammer in hand, I felt that bands across the country will make there way and play in this place, that local bands will come and go across its boards, the sound will rock, its shows will become infamous for energy and excitement, and that another small chunk of DIY punk rock history is in the making.

Or maybe not. The place could be permanently shut down by the fire m marshall or the Boston pigs next month, and could be just another place that didn't work out. Maybe a few kids will fuck up it up by spraypainting on the wrong wall, or hanging out front by the street with beer cans and getting caught. There are also the predictable problems that come with all venues: the need for security, a fair and manageable booking system, and paying the monthly rent. Not everyone will like the way the place is run, and there are sure to be disagreements and compromises along the way.

All I know for certain, is that right now in Boston punk and hardcore something fun is brewing, and this is a beginning of something fucking awesome. I can't wait.

I also encourage anyone who wants to open a DIY venue in her town, and is willing to work for it, to just get started and try like hell. That is often the hardest part, getting thoughts into action, and not being afraid to make mistakes along the way.

And that goes for everything, especially when working against the forces that divide and oppress us. When people come together with energy, and build momentum, any change seems possible. And that's what keeps me going.

Never underestimate the power of a single nail and a driving force of energy. Smash!

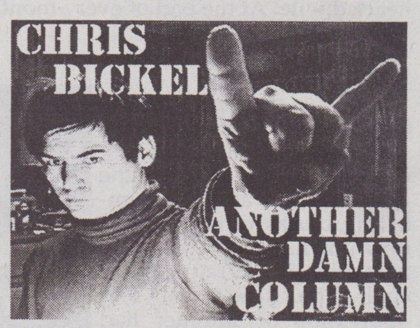
***

End This: To get in contact with Regeneration to volunteer or booking, call 1-866-414-ROCK and leave a message. You can send your music to: Regeneration, 3rd Floor, 960 Mass Ave., Boston, MA 02118 or email: regenerationboston@hotmail.com.

I am excited about this column, and a big thanks to Arwen and Mike for giving me a chance. Thanks to MOLOTOV COCKTAIL, the MENSTRUAL TRAMPS and Desmond Decker for rocking out on my CD player as I wrote furiously to make my first deadline. And, thanks to me for getting off my ass and writing my third guest column to *MRR* last month. It turned out to be my first installment of "Ransom Notes." Hell yeah.

Comments (and corrections) are encouraged at ransom@plaguedomes.com. You can also check out the PROFITS website at www.theprofits.org .

Fuck shit up this fall, and celebrate the people and movements working for change. In solidarity, and up the punks, Erika Ransom



Part One: Busy

Busy. Busy. Busy. I can't think of a time in my life when I've ever been so busy. I'm not complaining, mind you. It's pleasant not being bothered with boredom. It's just that there are days when I feel so absolutely overwhelmed, I fear I might totally lose grip on all of reality... or at the very least take out my frustrations on innocent young pop punk and emo bands.

I've been working two jobs. Again, I'm not complaining. They're not difficult jobs. I work at a record store and a recording studio, so it's not like I'm breaking my back (or even breaking a sweat for that matter). It is tough to juggle the two though, because I'm having to keep two different sets of procedures and schedules straight. The other day I drove down to the record store

when I was actually scheduled to work at the recording studio... an easy mistake to make, as both jobs have the word "record" in them.

The record store job has been getting on my tits lately because, due to a change in ownership, the shop is moving away from its hole-in-the-wall Jazz LP shop roots and into the realm of the Sam Goody's of the world. Every day a new set of policies gets handed down from the "main office" that disrupt the once relaxed working atmosphere. I was recently instructed by upper management to "make more of an effort to wear a clean shirt every day." Just who the fuck do they think they are?!? A clean shirt?!? Every day?!? It's a record store for Christsakes! Anyway, that job is getting shittier and shittier. It wouldn't really be so shitty if I was hired under the oppresive conditions that exist there now, but I was hired under the previous management when the place was really laid back and friendly. I'd rather start off in a shitty situation knowing full well exactly how shitty it's going to be, then have to make an adjustment from a previously pleasant situation to a presently unplesant one.

The recording studio job is a pleasant enough working atmosphere. My only frustration with that job is that it's a daily reinforcement that the world is chock-full of shitty bands.

On top of holding down two jobs, I've been trying to make records for two (or is it three?) of my own shitty bands. The GUYANA PUNCH LINE album is coming along slowly (I'm not sure if I've ever mentioned in my *MRR* column that I'm in a band... so... uh... I'm in a band called GUYANA PUNCH LINE.). Anyway, we did our recording almost a month ago, and then mixed a couple of weeks after that. We sent all the stuff to Ken at Prank Records to press it up and he didn't think that the mix sounded "right." So, now we're trying to get the studio time booked to go in and fix the record up. I'm not mad about this, because Ken is right. There was a certain element missing from the recording which we need to recapture before we commit it to wax, but it's definitely frustrating to see a project get dragged on and on and on. I'm still trying to finish the artwork for the lyric book (probably around 20 pages worth) and I still haven't come up with an album title or cover concept (if anyone has any good album title ideas they aren't using, lemme know!) If the only thing I had going on was the GUYANA PUNCH LINE album, then I'd have plenty to keep me occupied. Unfortunately, that's not the case and I fear I've bitten off more than I can chew.

I've been handling management and production of the new album by my close friend Teabag Balzac and his queer metal band CONFEDERATE FAGG. This record has also been a slow moving process. We had to mix it a couple of times to get all of the ACCEPTesque back-up vocals just right, but it's almost ready to be pressed. Of course, I don't have enough to do already so I'm ressurecting my old record label, STEREONUCLEOSIS, to release this masterwork entitled *Rock and Roll Hall of Flame*. I've gotta do the artwork for that record as well, so hopefully Photoshop won't crash my hard-drive. If the only thing I had going on was putting out the CONFEDERATE FAGG record, then I'd have plenty to keep me occupied. Unfortunately that's not the case and I fear I've bitten off more than I can chew. Busy, busy, busy.

If those two projects don't crash my computer (as well as my psyche), maybe the third will. I recently endured the harrowing ordeal of jumping through a series of burning hoops we in the industry like to call the "grant writing process." I wrote a grant proposal and actually obtained funding from the South Carolina Arts Commission to release a CD of experimental/ soundscape/ avant garde/ music I've been recording for about ten years under the name ANAKRID. Most of these recordings are in the vein of NURSE WITH WOUND, STOCKHAUSEN, HARRY PARTCH, RON GEESIN and a bunch of other turtleneck wearing motherfuckers that most of the readers of *MRR* would find pretentious and boring. I'd say the ANAKRID stuff is the punk version of all of that pretentious and boring stuff, which wouldn't make it any less pretentious and boring to most *MRR* readers, but fuck it. I'm not putting it out for them. Hell, I wouldn't be putting it out at all if the government weren't giving me the free money to do so. That's not to say that it's not worth being heard. I personally think the stuff is really good. I just don't know why in the hell I decided after ten years I wanted to release this shit now when I've already got two other records to finish while working two jobs. I'm not bitching, mind you. I swear, I'm not bitching.

So. In between trying to record and release three different records, and working at the record store and working at the recording studio, I've managed to find some extra time wasters just to make certain that I don't get suckered into watching any of this season's new reality TV shows.

Time waster #1: 78's.

My grandmother died a few weeks ago. I was really close to her even though I hadn't seen her in a couple of years. I dropped everything to go to the funeral. I had to fly to Louisville, KY for the service. (As an aside: I think that open casket "viewings" are about the most fucked up and morbid thing our Judeo-Christian society has to offer... thanks... now my last memory of my grandma is a waxy-looking corpse. 'Preesh.)

The one thing that my grandmother left to me was her 1930s vintage mahogany cabinet radio and phonograph. I moved it back home and it's taken over. I don't listen to CDs anymore. I'm hitting all the thrift stores and buying 78's on the cheap (For all you real young kiddies, a "78" is an ancient form of a record that plays at 78 rpm's as opposed to the 33 rpm's of your standard LP... now please don't make me explain what an LP is.)

I can't even begin to describe how amazingly warm and enveloping those records sound coming through the old tubes in that amplifier. I've been getting all sorts of bizarre pre-rock swing records, as well as some amazing blues and bebop stuff. If only DISCHARGE had put some of their shit on on 78, my life would be complete. Alas, that's not to be, so for the time being, until the novelty has worn off, I'm sticking with CHARLIE PARKER and XAVIER CUGAT. A 78 only allows about three minutes of music per side, so there's a lot of record flipping. Man is it worth it though. I'm afraid I'm gonna turn into Steve Buscemi's character from *Ghost World* soon. I suppose that wouldn't be such a bad thing, though.

Time waster #2: www.garageband.com

A guy I work with plays in a blues band and he told me about this site called garageband.com. I checked it out and found it to be pretty fascinating. Basically, here's the deal: you can upload mp3's of your band's songs. The songs get reviewed by other musicians, and the better the reviews you get, the higher your song moves in the ranks. The top ranked songs get noticed by supposed "industry insiders" and the highest ranking bands get "signed." You have to "earn" the right to upload your songs though. You earn this right by reviewing at least 20 other bands' songs. Here's the interesting part: when reviewing these songs, you don't get any information about the song you are hearing. You just hear the music. That way everyone is on a level playing field. The reviews are based soley on the sounds coming through the speaker. That way a good Wisconsin band has a better chance than a mediocre New York or LA band.

Anyway, I thought the set up was interesting, so I decided to upload some GUYANA PUNCH LINE stuff. Not in an effort to participate in the "contest," mind you. I just figured the site was providing free webspace to upload mp3's, and I figured it would be funny to see the reactions to our music, as most of the "punk" bands on the site were nothing but third rate BLINK 182 and GREEN DAY clone bands. GUYANA has been getting all of the harsh reviews I expected from kids who think NEW FOUND GLORY is about as punk as it gets. (Particularly because one of the tracks I uploaded has a ridiculously long-winded lyric explanation tacked onto the end to compensate for the site's withholding of lyric sheets on songs getting reviewed). I enjoy getting the bad reviews. Reading a bad review helps me unwind after a long day of working two jobs and mixing three records.

The real fun for me though has been in my own reviewing of the so-called "punk" bands on that site. My guesstimate is that there's probably about 3,000 "punk" bands registered with garageband.com, and of those 3,000 at least 2,500 are crappy pop punk wannabe-their-radio-friendly-hero clone bands. Of the 150+ reviews I've written of songs on that site, I'd say that 130 were of songs by bands that were doing their damndest to sound *exactly* like BLINK or JIMMY EAT WORLD or any/every band on the Fat Wreck Chords roster. It's been fun to write nasty comments in the reviews to make these kids think about their total and utter lack of originality, but it's also saddening that there's this many bands out there all trying to do exactly the same thing. Strangely, on that website I've heard hardly any Victory-style hardcore bands, hardly any thrash bands, hardly any grind bands, and forget about crusty or powerviolence bands. Just hundreds of safe-as-milk pop punk bands whose members would probably think the VOID or

JERRY'S KIDS just sounded like a bunch of screaming and noise.

I don't wanna turn this into a multi-page tirade about what punk is or isn't supposed to be, so I'll try to keep this as brief as possible. When bands like GREEN DAY and BLINK 182 get radio airplay and mainstream fame, that's bully for them. It's obviously what they wanted. The unfortunate side effect is that you get a bazillion copy-cat clone bands that think they're punk bands because they sound like their favorite so-called "punk" bands. These are bands that are trying to "make it big." Sadly, they don't realize that the major labels have already signed all the bands they're gonna sign that have that particular sound. The labels are already looking for the "next big thing" they can exploit, so these bands are never gonna get the mainstream success of their idol bands. They're left to simply water down everything the rest of us call "punk" by getting onto bills and flooding the market with crappy records. There's nothing dangerous or thought-provoking or boundary-pushing or even rocking about these bands. They're just cute, safe, radio-ready groups that aren't even wanted by radio. I can fully understand having influences, and letting the influences show in your music... but I cannot fathom wanting to sound exactly like your favorite band. How many more love songs sung with those annoying "Weird Al" sounding vocals do we really need? (And by the way, who originated that "Weird Al" style of singing for pop punk bands?) These bands apparently exist solely to keep musical instrument stores and recording studios in business. I guess I shouldn't complain too much. I work at a recording studio. My job depends on these bands recording their crappy demos. One of my jobs, at least.

OK. I got way off track.

What was I talking about? Oh yeah, how busy I am. Busy, busy, busy. At least I've gotten this month's *MRR* column out of the way.

Part Two: Disclaimer

There is always potential for abuse in the realm of self-promotion for *MRR* writers, particularly when those writers play in bands, run labels, write zines, do web sites, etc. etc. If anyone found this column to be an abuse of the privilege of this forum, then I would advise them not to buy the GUYANA PUNCH LINE, CONFEDERATE FAGG, or ANAKRID records when they come out. Don't support such flagrant abuse of power.

Part Three: Unashamed

I swear this isn't self promotion even though I play in a band with one of the members: buy the new ANTISCHISM double album retrospective. I swear this isn't self promotion, even though I sing on one of the tracks: buy the new KYLESA album. Actually, also check out the KYLESA/MEMENTO MORI split 7 inch. The MEMENTO MORI side will have your jaw dangling. Other recommendations for this month include the new FROM SAFETY TO WHERE CD (UNWOUND meets JOY DIVISION sounding schtuff for all you sweater-wearing types). I've also been enjoying the band Y quite a bit lately even though I know they've been around awhile. I just recently got turned onto 'em and they've been nailing my balls to the wall with their nonstop thrash attack. Of course, I was listening to all of this stuff before the 78's took over. Now it's the NAT KING COLE TRIO and MUGGSY SPANIER all the way.

Part Four: Contact

I can be contacted at: Chris Bickel / PO Box 50454 / Columbia, SC / 29250 / USA or email at: smashismo@aol.com

If you have any old DISCHARGE 78's you aren't listening to, send 'em. I could also use some more copies of HERB ALPERT's *Whipped Cream and Other Delights* on LP. 85 copies is not enough to wallpaper my living room! If I've been slow in responding to letters, just remember I'm fucking BUSY!

It is useful to compare the music press reaction to North American punk rock before and after 1980. In the late 70s, punk rock was written about with regularity. Even magazines as boring and washed up as *Rolling Stone* hailed New York punk the future of rock 'n' roll. While NY got most of the press, the late 70s punk scenes of Cleveland and San Francisco also got favorable review.

Cross the decade line and you will find that early 80s North American punk rock (i.e. hardcore) lacks the press that it garnered a few years earlier. When you do find the odd article on the subject, it usually centers on Los Angeles (ignored in the late 70s) and how violent the LA scene is. Sure, the mainstream media sought out punk horror stories and printed/broadcast them with regularity. It always has. However, magazines that were supposed to be keen to punk—*Creem* and *Trouser Press*—jumped on the anti-hardcore bandwagon.

I think don't think the big reason these folks hated hardcore was because it was faster, louder, and seemingly dumber than its forerunner. Nor was it because it was "more violent." The reason hardcore was loathed was because it was a product of the suburbs.

Granted, there is much wrong with suburban America. It is often shallow. Its residents are atomized. It is boring. It does not encourage intellectual or cultural exchange. To many it seems plastic and thus disposable.

Part of the reason for the blah of the suburbs is that suburbs are designed so that people can "have their privacy." Unlike cities, suburbs make it easy to block out the sounds and sights of others. Because automobile travel is the main mode of transportation in the suburbs, it is easy to avoid people altogether. From home to car to office to car to home.

The suburbs are also what they are due to the people who live in them. Those who seek suburbs are looking for a certain amount of isolation. They want to close the world off when they get home from the job. This was not a foreign idea to those who designed the suburb. The designers gave the people what they want...some of the people, that is. They forgot one important group of people: the children of the suburban dweller.

Small children do not seem to think one way or another about suburbs. The lack of stimulus provided by the suburbs is irrelevant. However, as kids grow older, they think of their surrounding with more sophistication. What once stimulates now bores. Barbies, Legos, and Tonka toys are worthless. For many, Little League baseball and kid's soccer becomes a chore. And unlike the city—where there is plenty of stimulus—or the country—where kids are acculturated to deal with less stimulus, the teen with nothing to excite her quickly gets bored.

This boredom is dealt with in different ways. In my neighborhood, we would take drugs and commit petty crimes. Pot was always around. There were regular keg parties. And speed could be had with relative ease.

We got our kicks by breaking things and spraypainting. Shoplifting was also a recreational activity. Some of us turned to arson to relieve boredom. One of our kind became a bomb maker.

Most of my friends and I would have probably wound up dead or in jail if not for one thing: Punk rock. The neighborhood's discovery of the Sex Pistols was salvation for a small group of us. While we didn't really think about it at the time, the message we got from the Pistols and other bands—anyone can do it—changed our lives. That same message was heard by bored suburban teens all across North America.

The idea of rock 'n' roll being open to anyone with a guitar, some drums, or even a set of vocal chords was new to my generation. We grew up in the age of the guitar hero. Prog rockers were looked up to as artists, the epitome of rock 'n' roll. To play rock 'n' roll, one needed to have classical training and many expensive instruments. Punk rock was a revelation. We took that message of "anyone can do it" to heart.

My first band was formed in my friend Mark Owen's bedroom. He played a crummy Japanese electric guitar through a 25 watt amp. Craig Sellers, AKA Cellhead, played bass...unamplified. I played drums on a cardboard box. We called ourselves the Suburban Misfits and were pissed when we found out about some band in New York with half our name.

Since I could hardly keep a beat, I moved over to vocals while we looked for a drummer. During our fruitless search for a drummer, we recorded one song on a cassette recorder. It was a Public Image-ish number that got faster as it dragged on. It was about being bored.

The Suburban Misfits broke up within a few months with-

out playing live. However, our neighborhood was to have another punk band take its place—the Ungratefuls. This band had a drummer who not only played a real drum set but had a sense of rhythm. And the band had more than one song.

The Ungratefuls did not start off slow and wind up fast. Like the hundreds of hardcore bands forming through out America, the Ungratefuls were born to speed. I only remember one of their songs, their theme, "Ungrateful." The best line was "See that lady/grab her purse/smash and grab/fuck that nurse."

The Ungratefuls broke up after their two singers kicked each other out of the band. The most musically inclined of the bunch—the drummer—formed the Lamos, who, though not from our neighborhood, were still our band.

The Lamos not only lasted long enough to play a show, they remained a band for about three years. They broke up only when high school graduation meant that their parents could demand something more from their sons than membership in a punk band.

Of all the bands to come from Sacramento, the Lamos are one of my favorites. They played thrashy hardcore, with good teen lyrics. They were reasonably tight and had a hell of a guitar player. They never properly recorded but tapes of their live set on radio station KDVS float around. The folks who own a tape of that radio show rightly cherish it.

Tonight I threw on a copy of the Neos' 1982 7", *Hassiban Gets the Martian Brain Squeeze.* If the Lamos were to have made a record, I would imagine that it would have sounded something like *Hassiban....* Like the Lamos, the Neos play spastic thrash with lyrics that are full of teen idealism as well as cynical humor.

I don't think that because the Neos were from Victoria, BC, Canada matters much. Victoria is on a pretty island but it has its suburbs. Just because Canada is north of the US border does not make its teens immune from boredom. Nor does being Canadian kid mean resignation to the dull. Believe it or not, Canadians are people too.

Hassiban... has the Neos doing 14 songs. 13 of them are blistering, smart ass thrash numbers with subtle twists and turns. The most inventive, "Jungle Beat-So It Seems," has a hardcore guitar line over a throbbing bass and a Bo Diddley beat. The vocals are multilayered and the final effect sounds like a more fucked up Rudimentary Peni.

Hassiban... is the Neos' second EP and among hardcore collectors it is considered a classic. That designation is warranted and sooner or later the record will get its due in the music press. "Really?" you say in disbelief. "The Neos in the mainstream? Bah!"

Don't scoff. That is not as far out as it seems. The mainstream has warmed up to punk rock. They have finally discovered that thousands of North American teens (and more worldwide) responded to the press's Patti Smiths with bands of their own—groups like the Neos and the Zero Boys and the Angry Samoans.

Black Flag are finally—twenty years late—getting their due. *Mojo,* the English nostalgia mag, has profiled them. Don't be surprised if VH1 gets around to Black Flag: Behind the Music within the next few years. Perhaps Greg Ginn will get some kind of MTV award or maybe even, gasp, a Grammy!

Think I am stretching things? I don't know. The spring of 2002 saw a television ad for AT&T that was aimed toward the aging punk market. The ad featured a "I was once a punk" yuppies chatting with his ex-band mates about Back in the Day. Images of spiky haired American punk kids warmly flash on the screen.

Another ad—one for cookies—has a punk theme song sung by cartoon cookies. "Punky" is now acceptable to be used to sell clothes. In Madison Ave.'s eyes punk has gone from threat to marketing tool.

Does that take away the power of bands like the Neos or make their record any less important? No. However, when records like *Hassiban...* start getting praised in the mainstream press, it is always OK to ask: Where were you then? And what do you want from me?

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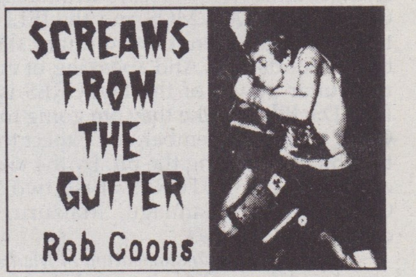
Write me if you will. I accept gifts. I don't want junk mail or email solicitations—and that includes info about your band, label, radio show, etc. Look at http://www.sl.net/~ttbooks/moolala/dailyreview.html if you are bored. Scott Soriano, 1114 21st St., Sacramento, CA 95814, USA, scotts@sl.net



It is always good to start off a column with a little self-promotion. In case you have not seen the ads in the magazine or heard the rumors floating around, it is important that you know that Maximum Rock N' Roll Radio is back from the dead! We have resurrected the radio show and we are now broadcasting on the web. As of right now we have been switching the DJs around and are putting a new show online every week. If you go to the website www.byofl.org/maximum/radio/ you will see that we have two current shows listed and the playlist from each show. Plus we have it set up so it should work with both high and low speed connections! I have done two small DJ slots so far, and I have been able to play some really amazing music. One set was all Japanese bands, like D.S.B. and GAUZE. And the other set was all Polish bands, including classics like ARMIA and DEZERTER. So please check it out and enjoy!

I went to see a photo/flyer exhibit of Italian punk that was being put on here in San Francisco last night. It was pretty cool to see some early photos of bands like WRETCHED and NEGAZIONE, plus many posters and flyers of shows (most of them from squats). There were actually quite a few photos of American bands playing in Italy, which was cool to see as well. I ended up buying a flyer/poster at the show, which was one for YOUTH OF TODAY and LETHAL AGGRESSION playing a show in Italy. A couple of bands played at the exhibit as well, including the GRABBIES who are transplants to the area from Italy. The room was so packed when they played that I could not get in to see them. But I have seen them once before and the are a ball of chaos and aggressive energy. So watch out for them. And thanks to Stefano from Italy and the Balazo gallery for putting the show on!

Speaking of live bands, I went and saw quite a show recently; it included WALKEN, STRUCTURE OF LIES, LACK OF INTEREST, PHOBIA and HIRAX. WALKEN started the night off with a powerful set of metal and hardcore fused together, with a ton of intense time changes. Their songs seemed to drag on a bit, but overall I was pretty impressed. I had fairly high expectations for STRUCTURE OF LIES, but their technical metal style didn't really go over very well live. It seemed to be a bit garbled and forced, so for now I will stick to their recorded material. Up next, LACK OF INTEREST and PHOBIA played one after the other. I have seen both bands many times and they were definitely both on their game tonight. PHOBIA's set was powerful as fuck, even with the addition of a new drummer. At the end of the evening, HIRAX started setting up to play and the leather vests and feathered haircuts started pouring in. The smoke machine start rolling and Katon and Company turned the energy level on high and launched into an unforgettable set of thrash and crossover metal. HIRAX ended up stealing the evening and tore the house down when they did their classic "Bombs Of Death." A killer show indeed!

BOMBSTRIKE - *Kaos Och Djavulskap* CD: BOMBSTRIKE, from Sweden, blast through 15 hard charging songs, creating an impressive debut full-length. One listen to their hammering crustcore and it is obvious they have taken influence from bands like SKIT SYSTEM and WOLFPACK. Solid production stands out throughout the record and they even throw in a KAAOS cover. If you are a fan of the records coming out on Distortion and Fight Records, then I highly recommend that you check out Yellow Dog and this awesome release! For those who prefer vinyl, this is apparently going to be released as an LP as well. (Yellow Dog, PO Box 550 208, 103 72 Berlin, GERMANY; yellowdog.de)

THE FUTURES - *Electric Wave From The Underworld* CD: I was recently talking to somebody and they were telling me I had to check out the FUTURES from Japan. So I tracked down this

CD and now I am sharing their greatness with you. The FUTURES start with the basic structure of an awesome thrash band, and then they combine in all these quirky elements, time changes and styles to create an amazing release. If you took INDIGESTI, THE YAH MOS and the JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS and threw it into a blender, you might start to understand what this band sounds like. And speaking of comparisons and influences, the guitar player of the FUTURES is from JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS. It looks like they are going to come over for a short West Coast tour in November, so I expect to see all of you there cutting the shit and starting the pit. By the way, if anybody has any extra copies of the FUTURES' first two EPs, get in touch. (MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu, Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN; dance.ne.jp/~mcr/)

LLYNCH - *Transformation of Madison* CD: LLYNCH is a fairly new band from Germany and they create a pretty killer mix of hardcore and metal. They seem to take a lot of influence from bands like BOTCH as they mix together surging, somewhat technical metal/hardcore with quiet melodic parts. The pace of the music is fairly mid-tempo and the vocals are harshly screamed. I was pretty impressed with this four-song release and I am looking forward to hearing some future things from this band. And they are currently on tour with PG. 99 in Europe. Damn, I wish I could see some of those shows! (Scorched Earth Policy, Irisstrasse 19, 67067 Ludwigshafen, GERMANY)

SKINLESS - *Miscreant* EP: I was surprised to see this band with a release on Hater Of God Records. But hey as the saying goes, if the glove fits you should wear it. SKINLESS grunt their way through a couple of tracks of hammering death metal. There are enough tempo changes here to keep the listener involved, but in all honesty I generally prefer my death metal furiously fast and brutal. So after two full listens I just didn't find it all that amazing. One thing to note is that in typical Hater Of God style the packaging is top notch with an eye-catching die cut cover. I read recently that Hater Of God is also doing a SKINLESS picture disc, so if you are a fan be on the lookout for that as well. (Hater Of God, PO Box 666, Troy, New York 12181-666; 4skinless.com)

BLACK MERINOS - *Sad Solutions* EP: Back in the late 90s, two members of IN/HUMANITY started this side project recorded a few songs and intended to put this EP out. Unfortunately this EP has not seen the light of day until now. On this EP, BLACK MERINOS play two songs of dark noisy hardcore backed with abrasive vocals. The pace of the songs is fairly fast and choppy and the music has a hectic yet sloppy feel to it. On the flip side they pound their way through a slower and even more morose song. Overall, I wasn't totally blown away by it, but it is definitely worth a listen. (Hyperrealist, PO Box 9313, Savannah, GA 31412; hyperrealist.com)

KYLESA/MOMENTO MORI - split EP: Even though this record got a stellar review not to long ago in this very magazine, I feel it is worth a second mention here. KYLESA have wasted no time moving up to the front of the sludge/doom/grind pack. They have only one song on this release, but it is a devastating crusher. The tone of the music and vocals is dreary and hopeless. And the pace of the music just grinds by as it surges and crashes over and over again. Awesome stuff! MOMENTO MORI shoots for a totally opposite style with a hard charging hardcore attack with a ton of metal influence. They fortunately leave the guitar solos back in the practice room, but they make sure the guitars are way up in the mix so you don't miss any of their epic riffs. Solid yet harsh vocals round out the MOMENTO MORI side and make for a really great song. This one is essential! (Hyperrealist, PO Box 9313, Savannah, GA 31412; hyperrealist.com)

TRAGATELO/KONTRAATTAQUE - split tape: TRAGATELO was a short-lived project that contained a member from LIFE'S HALT and a member from LOS CRUDOS. They play raw stripped-down punk rock that hits you like a swift kick to the head. The music is fast and furious and the female vocals sound so fucking *angry* as they spit out strong political rants in Spanish. Apparently TRAGETELO has already broken up, but at least I got to see them live here in SF. (Granted they only played a few songs, due to police problems, but I won't forget their killer set anytime soon) On the flip side of the tape, KONTRAATTAQUE trounced me with a outburst of blazing fast grinding and thrashing hardcore. They are an awesome yet underrated band and I highly recommend that you check out their records. So now that I have hyped this release I should mention that I don't know how many are made, or if it is even available. But if you can find it, then it is a must buy! (Kontraattaque, PO Box 39432, Downey, CA 90239)

IDOL PUNCH - *Violence Pop* CD: You know, it is so difficult to score hard to find records and CDs at our local stores, because everyone around here is a collector in some sense of the word. So if you aren't there when it first hits the floor, then forget it. Well I got lucky a few days ago and scored this IDOL PUNCH CD for just a few bucks. If you follow the Japanese thrash/punk scene at all, then you have probably heard of them. IDOL PUNCH hit you upside the head with a super spastic thrash attack. This is the kind of music that makes you really hyper and jump around your room. They toss in these weird time changes and oddball influences to keep things just a tad off balance. You may not be able to get this release, but you can check them out other places like the *V/A – Tomorrow Will Be Worse Vol. 3* compilation that is on Sound Pollution. Rock on! (Only Hearts Records)

SIX REASONS TO KILL/ABSIDIA - split LP: Holy shit, this is some serious fucking metal terror. SIX REASONS TO KILL, who are from Germany, blasted me with a barrage of some sick mid-tempo metal. Technical riffs, deep growling vocals, double bass.... yeah all the ingredients are here for some hard charging no-bullshit metal. On the flip side, ABSIDIA, who are also from Germany, follow down pretty much the same path with some volatile metal hardcore. They seem to have a tad more finesse in their style, incorporating some of that Swedish technical metal style. I actually liked ABSIDIA more, but both of the bands rocked my ass with blistering tunes and great production. Plus the cover art is phenomenal and a layout of the sleeve and the booklet is perfect. This is a must have if you are a fan of metal mixed with the new breed of hardcore! (Per Koro, 102514, 28025 Bremen, GERMANY)

Thanks to all of you readers and especially to those who send shit in or write to me. Sorry if I am a little slow on the reply sometimes, but I promise I will eventually get back to you. See keep in touch with me through PO Box 13085, Berkeley, CA 94712 or email me at xgoatcorex@hotmail.com.

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"I'm lighting a match, I strike the fucking flame. Gonna hold it to the cloth that I hold to blame. Soaked in blood, 200 cursed years. Can't soak up the sorrow of a million fucking tears. Let it burn."

COP OUT - *Colors*

Bush's bullshit "war on terrorism" (one uses quotes for things which exist in name only) has already manifested most of the characteristics of the dystopian society described in George Orwell's *1984*. Like Big Brother, Bush is an unelected figurehead for a secretive clan of wealthy hypocrites who live above the law. Like Orwell's fictional Oceania, the United States is engaged in a perpetual war in which victory isn't expected within our lifetime. Oceania bombs its own people, using the fear of faux terrorism to maintain control over the population. The United States trains and finances radical Islamist terrorists who predictably turn against Americans, then uses the specter of terrorism to justify everything from fast-track signing authority on free trade (opposition to NAFTA and the WTO, Bush's US Trade Representative argues, is "an attack on freedom") to tax cuts for the Administration's wealthy chums to smearing Tom Daschle as a communist terrorist enemy-of-the-state.

Bush's Operation TIPS ("Terrorism Information and Prevention System") asks mail deliverers, meter readers, truckers (!) and other citizens to spy on their neighbors and customers (or, in FEMA jargon, "to report suspicious, publicly observable activity that could be related to terrorism"). Thanks to your federal government, 128 channels may not be the only electronic marvel your cable guy is installing in your home. And what could be more characteristic of Stalinist totalitarianism than "disappearing" hundreds of detainees into a covert prison system—no lawyer, no trial, no charges—never to be seen again?

In *1984*, the ubiquitous Emmanuel Goldstein is the nation's bête noire, blamed by the government for everything that goes wrong. He leads the resistance; he's the author of a detailed historical treatise. Every afternoon the citizens of Oceania gather for a "two-minute hate," a cathartic scream-in during which Goldstein's smug face is flashed on screens, inspiring the delirious contempt of frenzied crowds.

Goldstein, however, does not exist. Nor does the resistance. The Party invented him to distract the citizenry from the *real* evildoers—themselves. And because Goldstein isn't real, Goldstein is immortal. The distraction, like the "war," is eternal.

George Orwell had Goldstein. George Bush has bin Laden.

Osama was blamed for everything that went wrong for the US during the 90s. Whenever something blew up, whether it was American embassies in East Africa or the USS. Cole or even the federal building in Oklahoma City, American officials trotted out bin Laden's name before the body count had even begun. So it was hardly a surprise when, on September 17, Resident Bush barked that bin Laden was "wanted dead or alive" for the 9-11 strikes, though in fact his role was probably limited to funding the 19 Egyptian jihadis who planned and carried them out.

Capturing bin Laden was Bush's top priority, or so he said time after time; the bombing campaign against the Taliban was marketed to the American people as a war against a regime that was "harboring" a wanted criminal. But after driving the Taliban out of Kabul, according to a senior US military officer serving in Afghanistan, "mission creep" began—US forces lost focus. American intelligence sided with some warlords while trying to assassinate others. They became entangled in local politics. They shuttled Afghan officials between Central Asian capitals to cut oil and gas pipeline deals favorable to the US.

The elusive Osama became a low priority. The Defense Department story is that back in December and January they had *America's Most Wanted* cornered in the Tora Bora mountains on Afghanistan's eastern border with Pakistan—they know he was up there because they heard him on walkie-talkies—and they bombed his hideout so mercilessly that he *must* have been killed. But they couldn't be sure either way, because Afghan soldiers of the Northern Alliance and Eastern Shuria were the first to comb the hills. As documented in my book *To Afghanistan and Back*, 95 percent of those troops were Talibs on September 10; they were far more likely to offer bin Laden a ride home than to shoot or arrest him.

Some experts doubt that the US was ever serious about capturing Osama. If he went on trial for 9-11, after all, his testimony about his years with the CIA could prove devastatingly embarrassing. This explains, they say, why Bush refused Taliban offers to turn over bin Laden, why Donald Rumsfeld bombed rather than invaded by ground, why Colin Powell never asked Pakistan to seal the border, why General Tommy Franks relied on unreliable local troops. And the Tora Bora escape tale doesn't jibe with Afghan topography or local eyewitnesses, who say that Osama left for Pakistani Kashmir—a far more typical exit for fleeing Afghans than the tribal areas of the Northwest Frontier Province—days after 9-11.

The Bush Administration denies such cynical motives for their actions, claiming stupidity rather than duplicity. Support for the inept-not-liars theory came with a February Hellfire missile attack launched by a drone plane in eastern Afghanistan. The airstrike targeted a group of men, one of whom looked to the drone's operator like the 6'5", white-tail-turbaned bin Laden. Three desperately poor scrap metal scavengers were blown to bits, but hey—one of them *was* fairly tall.

Like the Party in Oceania—sometimes at war with Eurasia, other times with Eastasia, the enemy always having been the same—the Bushies' line on Osama has alternated between vague, cunning, and menacing. "I suspect we will [find bin laden and other Al Qaeda leaders]," Rumsfeld said in March. "I think we have a good crack at it. I suspect we'll get all or most [of them]." In April, he backtracked: "He's alive or dead. He's in Afghanistan or somewhere else." By June, *Time* magazine was reporting, "White House aides say bin Laden's name rarely comes up in meetings."

Public support for living the rest of their days fighting Bush's war had begun to wane over the summer. What was missing from the cocktail of propaganda?

Just in time for the build-up for the inevitable orgy of patriotic sentimentality to commemorate 9-11-02, Osama bin Goldstein has been brought back from the maybe-presumed-dead. On August 28, *The New York Times* quoted military sources as saying that the Evil One "is probably still alive and moving between mountain hideouts somewhere on a 250-mile stretch of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan." The on-again-off-again hunt for Osama is on again, according to General Franks: "What I will say is that we have not seen convincing proof that bin Laden [is] dead. I actually don't know whether he's alive or dead."

"Where's Osama?" has become America's favorite parlor game. My theory is that he is no longer with us; it's not like the sad-eyed egoist to skip his regular appearances on Al Jazeera TV. My friends think he's laying low in Kashmir or Yemen. We discuss this topic frequently. Wondering about Osama is a lot more fun than whining about the fact that the economy sucks, that everyone we know is getting laid off, that we're losing our civil rights, that we'll be paying off those $300 tax cuts for the rest of our lives. The search for bin Laden keeps us distracted, and that's just the way our leaders like it.

Bush may have read just one book, but it turned out to be the right one.

BOOK STUFF: *TO AFGHANISTAN AND BACK* is available everywhere. If you want a copy of *TO AFGHANISTAN AND BACK* signed by me, please send $19 (includes shipping to anywhere in the US) to: Ted Rall, PO Box 2092, Times Square Station, New York NY 10108.

MORE BOOK STUFF: *ATTITUDE: THE NEW SUBVERSIVE POLITICAL CARTOONISTS*, is also out. It contains cartoons by and interviews with 21 cartoonists who are progressive, ass-kicking and funny as hell. The cartoonists include Andy Singer, Clay Butler, Lalo Alcaraz, Tom Tomorrow, Ruben Bolling, Matt Wuerker, Lloyd Dangle, Tim Eagan, Stephanie McMillan, Scott Bateman and yours truly. You can order it from any decent book store for $13.95.

If you read any of the now large number of books on the early punk scene, such as *We Got the Neutron Bomb, Please Kill Me, Punk 77*, etc., one of the things that comes up over and over is that after a certain "heroic period," the bohemian early punk scene was over run by suburban wannabes. Over and over I read hardcore decried as violent, macho, too political, too serious, etc. and the first generation types mostly talk about moving into theater, painting, drugs, sculpture, performance art, rehab, or whatever. OK, I'm here to speak for the suburban kids who ruined everything. *Tough shit!* After the punk gauntlet was thrown down, it was inevitable that it be taken up by…kids. Not art students, intellectuals, drug addicts, actresses, playwrights, or whatever, just normal teenage kids from the suburbs who didn't fit in. The kids with something to say, kids with time to kill, kids from the black hole, whatever. In this respect hardcore is much more like 60s garage rock than stuff like the Velvet Underground, Television or Patti Smith. Whatever the founding fathers of '77 expected their little bohemian club was going to become, it spoke to these kids. I don't buy that all the kids drawn to hardcore in the early 80s were violent HBer types who saw the violent media representations of punk and started going to shows to kick ass and do damage. A lot of the kids drawn to hardcore were the same sort of people who had stumbled into early punk in the 70s. They were just too young and too poor to have any intellectual aspirations or much of a vocabulary to express them. Instead of witty, sophisticated, and oblique, you got louder, faster, and harder. Which is the way we like it.

Almost every single one of the first wave pioneers of punk, and then first wave pioneers of hardcore as well, jumped ship for commercial music, or dropped out of the scene altogether. Yes there are notable exceptions. But there was a certain elitism to the early days of punk, that you were on the cutting edge of some-

thing new. That you weren't alone, there were hundreds of others like you who didn't fit in. But when that hundreds turned into thousands, it just got too hot for the first on the scene to handle and they bailed. I guess a certain type is always attracted to the new thing, and wants to be out front on the leading edge of whatever, I'm sure it was the same with surrealism, techno, or organ music. But where does that leave us? The people who came along in the 80s and make hardcore a way of life. I was one of the stupid suburban poser kids who managed to ruin things for everyone and I'm still doing it 19 years later. I've put much more time and work into hardcore in the last ten years than most of the original trailblazers did in their two or three years of glory. I'm not looking for a medal or anything. But I have to say that it's a certain type of person who is drawn to hardcore as a raison d'etre rather than a new wave to ride into the breakers.

I'm not saying the guys in Black Flag or Discharge are posers or anything—those guys created the aesthetic, paved the way, proved it could be done, etc. But other than license some back catalog, those guys haven't done anything for hardcore in like 15 years. Some people make their contribution and move on, some people are in it for life. Despite my fascination with the early 80s hardcore scene, I still want to think the best days of hardcore are still ahead. I want to believe that any day we are on the verge of a truly golden age of mind-blowing hardcore. Maybe that's wishful thinking, but all the essential elements are in place, it's just up to what we do with them. I hear from time to time about ex members of classic hardcore bands who are tracked down about re issues and can't believe anyone still remembers their band, much less that it still has a following. I gotta wonder about those guys. How could you *not* be into Urban Waste or Deep Wound? So anyway, thanks a lot to all the class of '77 and '81 for laying the ground work, but it's up to us suburban poser kids who ruined everything to take that particular ball and run it down the field.

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One of the most frequently asked questions I hear is "how do I start a distro?" Here is a little advice from a guy who has been around. I swear I wrote a column like this a few years ago, but still I get an email every week asking me this. For the last time here it is.

My first advice to everyone who wants to get into the "business" side of punk is the best advice ever handed out in the world of music. Don't Quit Your Day Job! This is the most important thing. If you are going to do anything right in the DIY scene, you will need a steady cash flow and an income to fall back on until you are 100% certain your enterprise (label, distro, band) can support you. DIY punk is about music, ideas, and passion, not money. You might eventually make a living off a label or distro, but don't count on it. One of the most endearing pieces of advice handed down to us from Tim Yo was that when you begin to think of punk as a business and count on it for your daily income it starts to cloud your judgment. You make decisions based not on what is the best thing to do for the scene but what is the most profitable. This is why labels put out really bad records by really generic bands instead of great records by good bands. They think they are going to cash in on the next big flavor. It's much easier to peddle CDs of a clone of NOFX, Screeching Weasel or whatever is big that week than to take a chance on an obscure but brilliant band from Brazil or Greece or whatever. Do it for the music, because it's fun, because it's cool, because you get rad records. Don't count on buying a Cadillac and house on the lake. If you break even, you did good. If you make a little every week, even better. But if you are just trying to make cash money, you might want to look into a more profitable enterprise. Anyway, back to your new distro.

The small distro plays a vital role in DIY punk. This is especially true for the millions of kids who live in towns without good record stores. When you really think about it, there are less than fifty really good record stores that carry punk in the USA. And of those only about ten are really, really good, and really into punk and hardcore (see my column a few months ago about cool record stores). And in Europe it's way worse. There are very few record stores there. Almost everyone in Europe and a lot of people here buy their records from people with a table at shows or by mail.

After telling you not to quit your day job, I'm going to have to ask you to give yourself a brief psychological examination. I mean, are you the kind of person who starts a distro? Are you detail oriented, do you follow through on things, are you organized, do you plan ahead and manage money well, are you knowledgeable about music? Does this sound like a fucking job application or what? Seriously, a certain personality type is drawn to this sort of endeavor. I think the most important is that you are not a flake. That is you follow through on things, and do what you say you are going to do. Like "I'm sending the money today" when you really don't send it for three weeks. Flaky distributors don't stay in business very long. They are also the kids about whom spiteful letters are written to *MRR* when they drop the ball and fuck up over and over again.

The first thing you will need to start a distro is some cash. The more the better really. A lot of labels become distributors by trading their stuff for other labels' stock. And every distro can augment it' selection by trading with other labels and distros. But you will have to have some "capital" to make your initial investment in stock. You will want to use great caution when acquiring your stock. All the time I visit stores and look at distros at shows that have the same crappy records that no one wants. The best way not to get stuck with a bunch of bogus records is to use great care in selecting what you want to carry. Many, if not most, of the people who will want to trade with you will be trading records that they are unable to sell on their own. That is to say, records that no one wants to buy. Every time you buy or trade for records for your distro, think about who is going to buy them. Always consider the "market" for an item before you take it on. Some stuff is great but not popular, and you might be able to move stuff like this by talking to people who you think would like it and convincing them of its merits. But don't try this with records that just suck. You will lose your credibility rapidly. Invest your "capital" in stock wisely and use all your cash flow to restock an increase your selection for a long time before you start using money from your distro for things like making your car payments or paying your rent. Always think of what people are going to want ahead of when it comes out and order smart every time.

Which brings me to new releases vs. back catalog. The record business is primarily new release driven. A key to having a good distro is to be the "furstest with the mostest" that is always have new releases that people will be looking for when they are still new. Try not to over or under order or you will either be stuck with too many, or run out before hardly anyone gets a chance to buy a new release. That said, you are always better off under-ordering and restocking, than being stuck with dozens of records that no one wants anymore. Some back catalog sells really consistently. Certain bands never go out of style or lose their appeal. Other back catalog just languishes in discount bins and makes you look bad. Being able to tell the classics from the has-beens is one of the most important parts of being an informed music buyer for a store or distro. Black Flag, Crass and Discharge have sold consistently for decades—meanwhile bands that were all hype a few years ago are already completely forgotten and sell for pennies on the dollar. After a little time in the distro business you will start to realize how much of record sales is based on hype and image, as opposed to merit. It will break your heart to see your favorite band's 7"s collecting dust while everyone asks you for the flavor of the week. But you will have to make the choice if you want to carry the hyped releases with the promotion behind them just to pay the bills or stay a specialist.

And specialist is what you need to be. The most successful distro in addition to having new releases when they are hot, also has stuff you can't get anywhere else. Hardcore Holocaust is a perfect example of a distro that stresses a certain specialized genre of music (Scandinavian and Japanese HC) and gets releases that are hard to get in the USA. Some distros specialize in bootlegs and re issues, some in SE, Crust, or imports. If there is a style of music that you like which you feel is poorly distributed or underserved, carve out that niche. I would say right now that Brasillian and Australian Hardcore is very poorly represented in the USA and could use much better distribution, so there's your angle. (although these countries produce mostly CDs, not vinyl, which cripples their scenes in the US and Europe) Also, there really need to be more people bringing Japanese hardcore into America. Quality-wise, Japanese HC is some of the best, but it's so difficult to find in the US that only a tiny cadre of record collectors even get access to it. Part of this is the result of the peculiar structure of the Japanese scene. But also, a it's wide open area for more people in the USA and Europe to move into. And how about US pressings of some of this stuff? The best way to build a

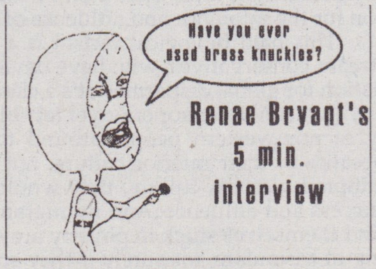
loyal following is to always have records people are looking for when they are looking for them. This means paying close attention to what sells and how fast and getting lots of feedback from your customers and potential customers.

Now you have to decide if you are going to just sell records at gigs and to your friends or sell records mail order and online. I would caution people to stick with just selling records at shows for a while before trying to tackle mail order or online sales. Mail order and web sales are full of confusion, misunderstanding, and a lot of extra hassles. I touched on these a few months ago in this column. I would strongly advise getting the hang of the distro business on a small scale before you attempt to enter the mail order arena. A town with no good record stores needs a good distro and it's important to start out serving your own scene before you move out into the larger world of selling records, a world which I must add is already crowded with other established distributors. If you can't make ends meet selling records at shows in your town, here's some pointers. First, start booking more shows—that sounds asinine, but if no one is setting up good shows in your town your scene is going to die out anyway. I'd cover this base first. If there are no punks, there will be no one to sell records too. Second, you can travel to shows in other nearby towns. Obviously this is a better proposition if you live in say Philly or New York City, than Tulsa or Salt Lake. But if you make some connections you can find places to set up your stuff, and there are always festivals to travel too as well. Third, you can start selling stuff online or by mail, which I think we've more or less covered. Lastly, you can get a van and take bands on tour. This worked out well for Neil of Tribal War for years. Get a van and gear and set up tours for foreign bands. Or drive a local band with no van around and handle their merch for them on the road. Set up your distro too and get your stuff to a different town every day. This is my favorite way of selling records and it's one reason why you see me driving DS 13 around with boxes of records.

You can also set up sort of a store at your house and have some sort of posted hours once a week, or have friends drop by when you get a new shipment. If you go six weeks between setting up at shows, you are really going to notice the hit to your cash flow. This does have it's pitfalls, like wingnuts coming over to your house, but if you are confident it's another way to get people to come to your distro if you can't bring it to them. You can also rent a table every week at a flea market or some other cheap place where people can find you on a regular basis. Much cheaper than opening a store and gives you a place to sell and interact with customers if there are no shows to go to.

Alright, I hope I've covered most of the basics here. I feel like a large percentage of the columns I write for *MRR* are of the "how to" variety. But every few days I get the same "Frequently Asked Questions" directed my way, How do I book a tour? How do I start a label? Etc. and there sure is no shortage of people doing it the wrong way and making stupid mistakes, so I hope those of you who stayed awake through this column learned something.

OK, the Runnamucks from Florida are cool as fuck, because they play fast aggro hardcore, but also because they used the cover of Captain America issue 193 in their ad in *MRR*. This critical issue deals with Captain America and the Falcon's desperate attempt to thwart a secret conspiracy from detonating the MAD-BOMB. Which I must add would be an excellent name for a hardcore band if it wasn't so similar to Madball. The Jack Kirby illustrated run of Captain America right around issue 200 is so fucking cool. Especially the secret royalist plot to seize control of America during the bicentennial celebration and install themselves as a new "Kings of America." Thrash and Marvel comics! I want to be crowned king of the nerds.



This column is going to break the usual diatribe format to share with you a letter I received from an incarcerated punk that moved me to tears. Many times in the punk scene, as well as in the world in general, we try our hardest to make a difference and often get discouraged from lack of feedback or what we perceive as apathy. I guess that the bottom line is that if we are sincere in what we are doing in trying to create positive change, we must hold faith that what we are doing, big or small, may make a difference to one person. If we can move someone to positive action with art, music, words, or example then it is worth it. It's a lot like teaching. As a teacher you are not thanked every day for the work that you do with the students and you do not always see the immediate results of your efforts. Then one day you will get a letter from a parent thanking you or a child that read at a second grade level will advance to fourth grade level in a short time. Those are the moments you hold out for, the small and large victories. This letter I received reminded me of that. It also reminded me that no matter how unimportant you think your words or actions are they could be making a difference to someone. You may never know, they may never tell you, but hold faith that what you're doing can and will make a difference. With that said, I want to make clear that I do not think that my column is what made this man take action. I believe he already knew what he had to do and was only waiting for the "straw to break the camels back." My column was a tiny piece of straw. The huge load on the camel's back was this man's convictions, background, value system, and friendships. Nevertheless, he was generous enough to share his humanity with me and gave me permission to reprint his letter as long as I omitted his name. To this I agreed. So here is the letter:

"You don't know me, but I just wanted to shoot you a few words. I'm an incarcerated punk in Michigan from Detroit currently residing in a state funded prison in Muskegon. Anyhoo enough of that, I'm writing to thank you for a column in *MRR*, actually all your columns are good but on in particular saved me from a major mistake that would have went against all I have ever believed in. First, I'll give you some background.

I've been in prison since early 2001 and one thing I learned very quickly is it's not a good place to be a punk. Being white in the penitentiary is even harder, being anti-racist is an almost overwhelming task. Blacks in prison have many legal state permitted hate groups. Nation of Islam, Moabites, Milonites, just to name a few. Where it is openly preached that whites are inferior. Probably about 80% of blacks are homosexual predators and they target whites. Rape by groups is a common thing. First they press you and try to extort you into complete fear, if that doesn't make you give it up then they just flat out rape you. By you I mean any white not affiliated with the Aryan brotherhood or other white supremacist gang or some type of prison gang period. At first I didn't have many problems probably because I'm older, 32, and just looked crazy with my hawk, piercings and multiple tattoos. But after quarantine and the reception center I was forced to remove all piercings before I could be released into what is called general population and grow my hair out due to lack of grease I began to have many problems. Every time I turned around some black guy was trying to get a piece of me. It was a horrible existence—for the first time in my life I was in fear. Now I've never been afraid to fight but with so many it seemed hopeless, so basically I spent countless hours in my cell staying away from virtually everyone and preparing myself for certain death because I was not going to give up my ass for anyone and I was determined if they moved to rape me they were going to have to kill me. During that time I began to hate blacks in a bad way. I began to talk with various members of white gangs reasoning if I joined them I wouldn't be bothered and my ass would be safe.

A friend of mine came to see me and she was totally ashamed of me. She said that I was going back on everything I believed in and stood up for. I said no I wasn't, I just hate niggers. This girl has known me since I was 13. We've been to pro-feminist rallies, anti-homophobia rallies, anti-racism rallies, and anti-establishment rallies. We were locked up together at Mumia Abu-Jamal protest, we've been hooked on cocaine and heroin together and kicked it together. We've done it all. She has been my best friend almost my whole life and here she was looking at me with hurt and shame in her eyes and I didn't care. I said, you don't know what its like in here, and she said no, I don't, but I know you don't ever have to give into thinking the way this system wants you to. I said it's not the system, it's the niggers. She left and I didn't hear form her for months until I wrote her and told her of my revelation. Anyhow, I continued hating and plot-

ting to join the Aryan Nation of Brotherhood.

Then a friend sent me some zines and the first one I read was the June 2001 *MRR*. Skimming through I came upon your column and I thought, "I wonder what my mistress has to say today." Your column was cool as usual and it wasn't about racism but the very end you did mention it, and I quote, "I was appalled one night when I watched *Fox Undercover* to learn that the peni-white supremacists prison gangs think that Riverside is ripe for their infiltration and living. This makes me want to vomit. Another reason to be even more vocal in our fight against racism, homophobia, and misogyny. Mobilization and coalition building should be on the minds and agendas of all activists." End quote. A light just clicked in my mind and I realized I was so wrong. These black men are just as caught up in the racist views the world has been filtering in our mind our whole lives. They are just as much the victims of propaganda as anyone else. I'm letting the establishment win. Blam, there is was, I was stunned, I couldn't believe I had allowed myself to break so quickly under pressure.

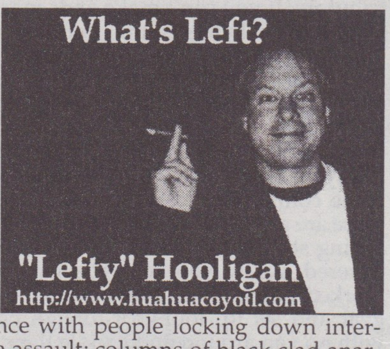
That night I made my own newsletter about "Racism in Prison" and went to the library and made 100 copies. I used all the money in my account. I plastered them everywhere: in the chow hall in the blocks, in the library in the rec. rooms and passed the remainder out on the yard. Of course this wasn't going to save the issue of my anal virginity. I knew that, but for the first time I felt like myself again. The day after that I saw a group of moabites that had been pressing me to go into the showers. I thought to myself, I'm not going to be afraid anymore and I'm not going to hate blacks anymore. I'm not going to join some gang that goes against my beliefs just for my own dignity. I have lived the DIY lifestyle since I was 13 and I'm going to die living that way. I decided it was time to make my stand and fight. I went to the shower and said anyone of you wants a piece for my ass come and get it. I fought hard and almost thought I was going to win—I could see fear in their eyes. The lone punk was kicking some ass. But then six more came from the shower to the changing room and the tide turned. I getting pummeled. A big black guy came in the door and my last conscious thought was this is it, I'm done.

The next thing I remember was laying on the floor with a towel under my head and the big black man sitting next to me holding ice on my face. He said, "You the white boy that been plastering those flyers all over the compound aren't you?" I nodded. He said, "Do you realize you just stood up in from of every white and black gang and said, "Fuck you and your ideology, with your flyers?" He said, "Boy, what the hell were you thinking coming in here challenging all those niggers for?" I sat up and said, "Because I was afraid and that fear made me hate and the hate made me consider joining something that I don't believe in and I know they were planning to get me and I decided it was gonna happen on my terms and I figured if I fought hard enough just maybe I could save my ass." He said, "Well, it did." I was shocked. I hurt so bad, I couldn't tell if I was violated or not. I said, "What do you mean? I totally blacked out, they had their chance." He said, "Well, I walked in, and not all of us agree with this kind of humiliation and it's perverted and wrong for others to carry on like animals and use our beliefs of African pride as a free pass for racist violence. I walked in and told them to stop. I told them this is the white boy that made all those flyers. He came down here to stand up for himself against all odds. If you do this to him you become everything he wrote against. Give him the respect he earned and let it go." This black man was my first convert, so to speak. Since then I've learned a lot. I've continued making newsletters and talking to a lot of people not only about racism but about everything I come to know and believe is wrong. I've formed some good coalitions with white, black, and Hispanic gangs, and can usually head off trouble before it gets out of hand.

Understand though, prison is a hard place with hard reminders. Racism is still very much prevalent, gang rapes continue, race v. race violence is still regular, but there are those of us few that stand against it and make it a little better for some. Because of your few words in *MRR* on June 2001, it became a little better for me. I just want to say thanks. Even though it could have been another article or column that caused me to wake up, it doesn't matter. I was yours. Thanks for your help in my struggle."

I can't express to you the roller coaster of emotions I felt when I read this man's letter. I was almost ashamed of myself because I wasn't sure I would have been brave or insightful enough to do the same. As a result of his courage I know I will endeavor to be that brave. I hope his letter inspired you too.

On a lighter note, I recently received an email from Elise, who is doing a girl zine in Malaysia called *Grrrl:Rebel Zine*. She is looking to have some more female columnists, etc. So any ladies out there want to do some world wide networking contact Elise at grrrlrebelzine@lycos.com. That's it for this month. I leave on tour Wednesday. Next month's column will probably rant the gory details. Until then you can reach me (I promise) at webmistress@ontherag.net /www.ontherag.net /PO Box 251 Norco CA 92860-0251.



I was feeling my age.

A couple of twenty-something traveling activists were waxing enthusiastic about their participation in various anti-globalization protests. They were making me envious with descriptions of huge street celebrations of poets, musicians, dancers, drum circles, puppeteers and performance artists; mass civil disobedience with people locking down intersections despite brutal police assault; columns of black clad anarchists rampaging against government and corporate targets. Their speech was heavily peppered with *Empire*isms, from the jumbled post-modern neo-Marxism of Hardt and Negri, and they tossed off phrases like "global north" and "global south" with the casual arrogance of overeducated, over privileged youth.

I'm fifty, so my experiences were steeped in the 1960's; a time no less creative in street protests and reinterpreting Marx, but one with a different terminology, not to mention sensibility. I despise post-modernism, its influence on the Left in general and Marxism in particular, and I noticed my participation in the conversation with the anti-globalization activists used the more traditional "first world" and "Third World," despite my own strong misgivings over these terms. I suddenly understood how an old CP-USA cadre must have felt, having organized in the CIO and survived McCarthyism, only to confront some snotty SDS kids who just assume they'd invented protest and revolution.

Goddamn whippersnappers!

Both "global north/south" and "first/Third World" are left leaning shorthand intended to describe something that should be obvious to anybody. There are vast discrepancies of wealth and power worldwide. Before I take on how the Left has attempted to analyze these discrepancies, let's quickly dismiss one very prominent myth, that being the supposed one-to-one correspondence between global racial demographics and these worldwide differences in wealth and power. White people populate those countries that have the power and wealth; those countries without are overwhelmingly inhabited by what the Left likes to call people of color, or so the myth goes. Aside from PC-blinkered college kids, this utterly simplistic analysis is popular among nationalists and Third Worldists, to include various Leninist threads of a Maoist tinge.

The hard neo-Nazi racialist right is also amenable to such a myth because it's quite easy then to equate socio-economic differences with racial differences. Vast stretches of southern Asia, Latin America and most especially Africa are mired in poverty and misery because the folks there aren't white, which is precisely the reason for the influence and affluence of Europe and North America.

This bald biological racism is a little much for more mainstream conservatives, who have devised a subtler, cultural explanation for global disparities. It's a clash of civilizations, with western civilization far superior yet terribly besieged. The vast majority of non-western people around the world are impoverished because of their inferior culture, not their inferior genes. If they adopted western culture, they would naturally achieve western success and affluence. And immigrants to western countries who find themselves stuck in poverty are accused of stubbornly refusing to assimilate, for surely if they spoke, dressed and acted like

their western hosts they would realize western prosperity. Alt.reactionaries like Larry Livermore spew this dreck all the time. It's the same old "the poor are poor because they're lazy" or "because they want to be" kind of crap that right-wing cretins have been spouting for centuries now. People around the world are impoverished because they insist on clinging to their traditional cultures instead of modernizing. And women are raped because they ask for it.

It's the classic "blame the victims" for their condition bullshit.

This is not to justify traditional cultures that practice female circumcision or slavery, nor am I trying to excuse poor people who commit mayhem and murder. I'm no cultural or moral relativist, as Larry likes to label his critics. I don't glorify the poor because they're poor. What I'm saying is that the poverty and misery of people in this country and around the world has almost nothing to do with failing to take responsibility for individual behavior or hanging on to non-western cultural traditions, and absolutely everything to do with economic and political factors.

In a word, it's capitalism.

To illustrate this, consider the situation of Argentina. A Third World country, right? It's certainly a country in political crisis on the verge of economic collapse, in massive debt to the IMF and World Bank, with nearly half its population living in poverty. Yet Argentinean society is composed almost entirely of European immigrants, so its culture is European through and through. Indeed, what native population the territory had was entirely wiped out by the European settlers, so Argentina is as white as any European country. Argentina's ranking as a Third World nation then is not due to its non-white population or traditional culture. (Has anyone else noticed the irony that the Argentinean Ernesto "Che" Guevara, long an international symbol for Third World revolution, was a white, virtually European male from a thoroughly *bourgeois* background?) Before someone pipes up that Argentina is the exception that proves the rule, please note that Russia, a vast European nation with a large white majority population, is on the verge of Third World status thanks to the mafia capitalism that took over with the fall of Soviet-style communism.

That cleared up, let's turn our attention to my main target this month, that being Leninist anti-imperialism. The term imperialism predates *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and various folks offered analyses of imperialism prior to Lenin's famous political treatise, to include J.A. Hobson, Rudolf Hilferding, Rosa Luxemburg, and Karl Kautsky. And while Lenin's conception—as part of that package deal commonly called Marxism-Leninism—became dominant, it too was subject to interpretation, from Bakhurin, through Stalin, to Mao. The proliferation of Third World nationalist theorists and movements have taken chunks from this welter and changed them further, either through vulgarization or fusion. Due to this profusion, the concept of imperialism is used eclectically and contradictorily, with Leninists often attributing to Lenin ideas that originated with Kautsky, Luxemburg or Mao. I will confine myself to Lenin's original analysis, narrowing this discussion down to a few basic concepts that every Leninist worth their salt should agree upon. The Marxist-Leninist tradition, much like pre-Copernican Ptolemaic astronomy, is fond of constructing epicycles within epicycles to make Lenin's doddering theory fit present day realities, so by taking down the root, I hope to kill the tree.

Lenin took his cue for his understanding of imperialism from Marx's explication of capitalism's dynamics, in particular capitalism's tendency toward the centralization of capital in larger and larger economic units, with a resultant increase in competition and conflict within capitalism. This trend, while evident in Marx's day, did not mature until the beginning of the 20th century, and thus Marx never used the term "monopoly capitalism," nor did he talk directly about imperialism or colonialism. The idea that virtually all production and distribution had become centralized in great trusts and cartels, constituting the monopoly stage of capitalism, is a central axiom to Lenin's theory of imperialism, as is the notion that this caused greater, not lesser competition for markets.

In turn, Lenin also considered two aspects to monopoly capitalism crucial to his theory of imperialism. Whereas Marx dealt with the development of industrial capitalism, and its need to find markets for its commodities, monopoly capitalism was characterized by the rise of finance capital, which required the export of capital in the form of foreign investments. Lenin believed that finance and industrial capital had actually merged in key sectors, creating an immensely powerful economic engine that the capitalist powers of Lenin's day used to bring to maturity the colonial policies of the 16th through 18th centuries. The settlement colonies of emigrants like Australia, and the commercial colonies that served as sources of raw materials and cheap labor like India, were constituted as colonial empires within larger, competing economic spheres of interest and influence, essentially partitioning the world between the capitalist powers. This basic relationship between raw materials and cheap labor from the colonial parts of the world on the one hand, and investment capital and manufactured commodities from the industrialized west on the other hand, as well as the quest for and struggle over such markets, comprise the essence of imperialism as a world-wide system, according to Lenin, who further argued that the spoils of this system had been used to bribe a sector of the working class with higher wages and benefits, thus constituting a labor aristocracy. He believed that this capitalist division of the world had been completed which, like the fruition of monopoly capitalism, signaled a period of increased competition and conflict between the capitalist powers as they attempted to re-divide the world market. In this turmoil, the weakest national links in the chain of world imperialism would break under workers' revolutions, leading quickly to a world socialist revolution.

Certainly the first World War, which served as the backdrop for *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, as well as the second World War so close on its heals, seemed to confirm Lenin's predictions about the dynamics of world capitalism, as did the period of workers upheavals from the Russian Revolution to the Spanish civil war for Lenin's prophecies about working class revolution. After the second World War however, the cracks in Lenin's theory of imperialism began to show.

In the context of a division of the world into "Communist bloc" and "free world," serious inter-capitalist competition and inter-imperialist rivalries all but evaporated under American hegemony, causing some Marxists to resurrect Kautsky's theory of ultra-imperialism. Organized labor's political clout increased in the west, causing any threat of workers' revolution to disappear. Ironically, the only working class uprisings with any revolutionary potential occurred in the Soviet heart of the Communist bloc, in East Germany, Poland and Hungary. Despite the socialist and national liberation trappings to the vast wave of Third World decolonization that took advantage of a world capitalism shattered by world war, the west grew ever richer and more prosperous as interstate territorial rivalries significantly diminished. Critical studies of imperialism's heyday revealed, for instance, that most British capital was not exported to its colonies, but rather was invested in the United States. Cost/benefit analyses of the old colonial empires demonstrated that colonies contributed only modestly to their mother country's wealth. No less a Marxist than Engels described the emergence of a labor aristocracy well before the rise of monopoly capitalism. Some economists asserted Hobson's original point that there was no necessary connection between capitalism and territorial expansionism, even going so far as to revive Shumpeter's assertion that, in the long run, capitalist expansion and territorial expansion were negatively related.

To put it bluntly, not only has capitalism survived imperialism, it has prospered. The world capitalist market has been reconstructed and continues to expand. Imperialism, far from being capitalism's highest and therefore final historical stage, has proven to be yet another phase in capitalism's long development. The "capitalist world order established under United States hegemony was not the outcome of a self-acting development of capital accumulation" as Giovanni Arrighi argues. "Rather, it was the result of 30 years of acute conflicts and convulsions in the world-system and of the active intervention in such conflicts and convulsions of socialist revolutionary vanguards" that no one could have predicted. Traditional Leninist theories of imperialism have become increasingly irrelevant to understanding, let alone changing world capitalism's current realities.

Worse than irrelevant, Leninist anti-imperialism might actually be harmful. That's because there's a disconcerting convergence between supposedly progressive, socialist anti-imperialism and "a somewhat obscure yet very important strand of the 1920's Conservative Revolution" known as National Bolshevism, to quote Loren Goldner from his review, "An American National Bolshevik," of Kevin Coogan's book *Dreamer of the Day: Francis Parker Yockey and the Postwar Fascist International*. As a strain of fas-

cism that is making a comeback today, National Bolshevism "ultimately transposes Marx's theory of the war between the classes to an international theory of struggle between 'bourgeois nations' and 'proletarian nations,' and buries the singularity and autonomy of the working class (the international class par excellence) in a mystique of the state and nation," not to mention virulent anti-Semitism, deep ecologism and racial separatism.

"In most of these 'new nations,' [in Africa, the Middle East and the rest of Asia after 1945] as well as in the semi-colonial countries of Latin America (Peron's Argentina and Vargas's Brazil come to mind), there was a real or potential local elite that recycled alloyed or unalloyed 'National Bolshevism' from its original Central and Eastern European interwar sources into international 'left,' 'anti-imperialist' currency," Goldner writes, continuing: "The 1960's Western leftist admirers of Chou en-lai and Lin Piao would have perhaps been surprised to learn that the latter's occasional references to the struggle between 'bourgeois nations' and 'proletarian nations' had been articulated decades earlier by Joseph Goebbels and Gregor Strasser."

These specific linkages mirror the more general coming together of a Left severely compromised by post-modernism and this resurgent fascism. To quote Goldner again: "The trendy post-modern left supports 'difference' and argues for relativistic tolerance (which extends to tolerance of barbaric archaisms, such as cliterodectomy, among 'subaltern peoples'), the hard radical right supports it to advocate (at least in its politer forms) removal, but both currents find themselves in profound agreement on the fundamental issue of the denial of humanity" ["what Marx called 'species-being'"] "as a meaningful reality." Rejecting Nazi biological racism, National Bolshevism too shifts the emphasis to a battle over "culture," further arguing "that the old categories of 'left' and 'right are dead, and insist[ing] that their desire to expel immigrants and Jews from Europe has nothing to do with 'grandpa's fascism,' but rather because they see such groups invariably as bearers of 'other cultures,' not inferior, mind you, but 'different.' These theorists have their own version of post-modern cultural relativism, and say that Jews, blacks and Arabs are fine—just as long as they in their own countries, or return there, the sooner the better." Calling "today's post-modernists" the "bastard progeny of the Conservative Revolution of the 1920's," Goldner's scathing, thoroughly unsettling exposé of the post-modernist Left's debt to fascism, as well as the dovetailing of Leninist anti-imperialism and National Bolshevism can be found in various articles at http://home.earthlink.net/~lrgoldner/.

The Leninist confluence with fascism via national bolshevism aside, anti-imperialism in its vulgar iteration is indiscriminately pro national liberation. "The great ideological inversion of this century is not only the blindness which claimed to see socialism where there was only Stalinism," Goldner writes in "From National Bolshevism to Ecologism," "But also—flowing from the same source—the myth of progressive anti-imperialism attributed to movements or to countries which, in contrast to the USSR, did not even make the pretense of abolishing capitalism." Thus Turkey's bourgeois revolution in 1923 under Ataturk, Egypt's national socialist revolution in 1952 under Nasser, and Iran's reactionary Islamic revolution in 1979 under Khomeini are all considered anti-imperialist. Thus vanguardists like the paleo-Leninist Workers World Party can claim that bloodthirsty tyrants like Saddam Hussein are "objectively progressive" because they mouth anti-imperialist rhetoric in their struggle against the US, even as they brutally suppress their own people, commit genocide against ethnic minorities within their country's borders and pilfer billions from the national treasury to live in splendor, with plenty squirreled away in Swiss bank accounts in case they're ever forced into exile. From irrelevance through treachery to absurdity; Leninist anti-imperialism would be little more than a laughing-stock if various and sundry ostensibly revolutionary, Third World movements and regimes didn't take it so seriously.

While die-hard Leninists attempt to resuscitate anti-imperialism with pathetic notions of neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism, most Marxists opt for one or another form of dependency theory arising out of Baran and Sweezy's underconsumptionist analysis of what they called monopoly capitalism, all of which attempt to explain the development of underdevelopment. Last column I highlighted Wallerstein's neo-Marxist world-system theory—with its emphasis on world power and hegemony as well as its core/semiperiphery/periphery division of the world capitalist market—in attempting to offer a plausible explanation for the historical distinctions in national development. Yet this and other forms of dependency theory are also seriously flawed. The current devolution, dissolution and disintegration of the nation-state seem to escape world-system theory, as I've already indicated. But that's just the tip of the iceberg as far as dependency theory's problems go. "The terms 'core' and 'periphery,' [...] were actually first used by the ambiguous (to say the least) sociologist Werner Sombart to describe Germany's relationship to England and France." Goldner comments. "See the excellent book of Joseph Love, *Crafting the Third World* on the transmission of ideology from the German right (Sombart) to the interwar Romanian corporatists (Maniolescu) to the Third World 'dependency theorists' (Prebisch, Cardoso) of the post-1945 period." Ernesto Laclau has argued that dependency theory demonstrates the ahistorical character of a timeless proposition that ignores the ever-changing forces shaping the relationship between first and Third Worlds. Then there is the difficulty of squaring the nation-state as a fundamental unit in a world market created out of the anarchy of corporate capitalism. Specifically, how dependency is maintained, and why it is far from uniform in the Third World geographically and over time are further glaring difficulties in dependency theory. Finally, the notion that surplus value comes, not from production as Marx postulated, but from exchange relations puts dependency theory's Marxism into question. The point emphasized by old-school left communism—the international reach and scope of capitalist and working classes—is what seems to be missing from the world-system big picture.

Which brings me to the tradition with which I generally identify. I really would like to wholeheartedly believe in Goldner's international working class and the left communist wet dream of a worldwide proletarian social revolution. I'm not convinced though that this traditional branch of Marxism goes much beyond Luxemburg's distinction between being inside or outside capitalist relations of production and how that relates to Marx's problems with the reproduction of labor or the place of primitive accumulation in capitalist development, let alone Trotsky's theory of combined and uneven development leading to permanent revolution. As such, left communism cannot adequately explain the differences and dynamics of wealth and power in the world capitalist market any better than does Leninism.

Returning to where I originally started this column, the phrase Third World has long been associated with anti-imperialism and Marxism-Leninism, even though it did not originate in those circles. A French term, *tiers monde*, it was coined in 1952 by the demographer Alfred Sauvy to describe where the colonies which gained their independence after 1945 stood in a post-war world divided into two antagonistic "camps," each headed by one of the two superpowers. Countries not regarded or regarding themselves as part of either the developed, US-dominated capitalist world or the developing, USSR-dominated socialist world constituted a third camp and were the underdeveloped Third World. The allusion to the *tiers état* of pre-revolutionary France was deliberate. The third estate lacked the power and privileges of the other two French estates, the nobility and the clergy, and eventually rectified that situation through a revolution.

"Third World" implies some commonality between the countries so designated, as well as the potential for a third alternative between capitalism and socialism. The closest international expressions of this concept by those who embraced it in the Third World were probably the non-aligned movement of nations and various "tricontinental" efforts in the 1960's. This is not to say that the label was universally accepted by the Third World, with rejection often based on not perceiving enough commonality or any real alternative.

In trying to court this Third World, the Soviet Union clearly made the link between it and the colonized, exploited regions of the world spelled out in Lenin's theory of imperialism, even as it formally rejecting the term because there was no other choice between capitalism and socialism according to official Soviet ideology. In splitting from the Soviet Union on the grounds that capitalism was being restored with Khrushchev's revisionism after Stalin's death, Mao took this confluence of Third World and anti-imperialism one step further by devising a three worlds theory of his own. The two camps dominated by the United States and Soviet Union were equally imperialistic—the former capitalist imperialist and the latter social imperialist—and thus constituted

the first world. The second world comprised the subalterns of the two superpowers—mostly the smaller developed European countries associated with NATO and the Warsaw Pact—while Mao's China was leader of a revolutionary, anti-imperialist Third World. Western Maoists and Third Worldists then polemicized and sloganeered the Maoist accented phrase to death.

With the collapse of Soviet-style socialism in eastern Europe and Russia, and consequent decline of "real existing socialism" worldwide, Third World too has fallen out of fashion as the term of choice, replaced by this bipolar "global north/south" crap. It's far too simplistic. I'm not arguing for resurrecting the faux alternative of a socialist world alongside the capitalist world and Third World. The three-tiered approach of Wallerstein's problematic world-system model, simplistic in its own right, nevertheless offers a way of categorizing world realities without resorting to a Manichaean either/or dichotomy. This is crucial because, in fact, things are yet more complex.

Take what's coming to be known as the Fourth World. Neo anti-imperialist and post-Third World theorists define Fourth World as those least developed countries by contrast to the so-called newly industrialized countries of southeast Asia. In world-system terms, the Fourth World is those regions that can never hope to form viable nation-states and national economies. This is tangentially akin to the Fourth World self-defined as the various movements of indigenous peoples around the planet. Again, I've boxed myself in for lack of space but, in brief, I think that the Fourth World will be another source for any greater revolutionary movement with the potential to overthrow global capitalism. Indigenous, aboriginal and native peoples often exist in opposition to the nation-state in which they reside, sometimes under partial to full conditions of autonomous self-government that do not seek to create yet another nation-state. That's the subject for yet another overlong column, which is another way for me to say, see you next issue.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

No.

Powerlessness. That's what you feel. The clock ticks slowly, you're enslaved by the work/rent/food/sex continuum—Strung out on shitty coffee and insufficient sleep, verbally harassed on all sides and unsatisfied. You've only been basking under the fluorescent lights for two hours, but it feels like twelve. The monitor's glare bores into your head. The inane chatter of coworkers invades your thoughts.

Don't worry. It will get worse. It always gets worse.

What can you do? Well, you can start by taking all of your clothes off, right now. Leave not a stitch on your body. Sit your pale, flabby ass in your ergonomic chair, buck naked, and fantasize. You are cruising the ghetto in an apple green candy car. Bumpin' Black Robb, Richie Rich, Mary J., 3-6 Mafia, High On Fire, Finky Binks, and DJ Assault. That hottie in the seat beside you has reflective shades on. You run someone over on the street, but it's 4 am and no one saw it so it doesn't matter. He said some mean shit to you anyway. Fuck that guy. The whole murder thing just adds to the excitement.

By this point, you're in the chair, totally wet/hard for all to see. No one in the office knows quite what to do, they avoid meeting your animalistic gaze at all costs. You don't care. Now you've got power, redemption for all the mental batterings. You rub your private parts on the monitor and speak only in monosyllabic grunts and piercing, feral emanations. It appears that security has been called. Fuck security. They don't want to touch the naked, howling person. You're going to go out, you don't know where and don't care. Towards the door, down the hall. That's when you suddenly go beyond redemption. Cauterize the frayed ends of all the abuse. Take a bunch of drugs and piss all over the elevator...Then you step out smiling.

••••

Yes indeed, through careful analysis and years of painstaking research, our highly trained sociological teams have determined that Americans, long thought by the rest of the world to be bereft of any sense of community or symbiosis with the chunk of expensive real estate they sit upon, have developed their *very own culture.* At last, Americans can be proud of something: Here, in this Petri dish right in front of me, we at No. labs have isolated the essence of American culture in the midst of a combined mass of cells sampled from myriad sources, including:

• Vulcanized rubber scraped from the unsullied sidewall of a 1999 Lexus SUV driven daily between Emeryville and home by a Filipino administrative assistant (and mother of two) living in sunny Hercules, California.

• Flakes of lead-based paint found on the sidewalk in front of a recently renovated one bedroom house in San Francisco's Mission district, a house which had recently seen the eviction of a 92-year old Irish man who had lived there for over half his life and could not afford to live there anymore when renovation costs were passed on in the form of a 170% rent increase.

• Crack vial glass shards from the shoe of the landlord of the aforementioned house (which was spotless under the former tenant), carelessly tracked in the house over the course of his showing it to dozens of prospective renters, none of whom wish to rent the house at the inflated price in a suddenly deflated housing market in an area that remains, essentially, a ghetto.

• Paper fibers from a 1930s-era A. Lomax (deceased, 2002) book of Negro Spirituals and Blues, published in part by the Library of Congress, which has been used extensively by Caucasian rock musicians who grow fabulously rich off of its compositions and structures, while the individuals who contributed the original material remained uncompensated.

• One drop of sweat wrung from the bandana of a Nicaraguan migrant worker who recently left his family and ancestral homeland to come to the US and earn ten times what he earned in Nicaragua for the same work, yet still a fourth of what a natural-born US citizen earns (the bandana was easily borrowed while he was busy eating a meal from a food truck that, while comparatively cheap, still cost him around twice his hourly wage).

• Blood flecks scraped from the sidewalk of a strip mall outside of a mini mart where a Palestinian shop manager was beaten to within inches of death by three teenaged African Americans who called him a "Camel-Jockey Terrorist" and then proceeded to loot food, alcohol, cigars, and a small amount of money from the store.

• Trace amounts of spit from an Aryan Nations skinhead who expelled it onto a pro-affirmative action protester and student while she lay in a passive resistance posture blocking entrance to a campus building at a prestigious university.

• Dried Scotch residue from the bottom of the discarded glass of a wealthy industrialist who has an unsettling habit of watching the Financial News Network constantly and smashing the television with a cricket bat when his stocks slip.

• A dab of mascara from a prostitute slain by her john, who reportedly told police "She wasn't worth 70 bucks."

• Three granules of cocaine from a bag confiscated from a small-time dealer (currently serving 25 years on a "third strike" mandatory minimum sentence), then resold by a police-approved dealer who bought the bag from them.

• A pubic hair from megastar rapper Jay-Z, collected from the seat of his Jaguar, a company owned by Ford Motors, which was started by Henry Ford, a notorious racist and anti-Semite.

In effect, what we have isolated is the ultimate American compound: A synthesized gel that is the pure base of our culture of acquisition. We here at No. labs foresee myriad applications of this somewhat unstable gel, such as:

• In its gel form, an antiseptic salve to soothe the open wounds of cultural isolation and lack of community.

• In a putty form, a wonderfully versatile and powerful plastique-like explosive.

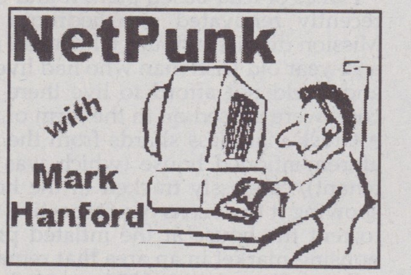
• Distilled, it can be a drink ten times as strong as alcohol, but leaving the imbiber in control of his facilities enough to work twice as hard.

• In trace amounts diluted in water, it can be a powerful pheromone producing perfume, creating a simultaneous air of independence and a desire to breed as much as possible.

This will all be tested on rats first, of course, and then will be available for last-stage experimentation in the inner cities where it will be made available to the poor under closely supervised laboratory conditions. After we have perfected it and done our best to refine out any nasty side-effects that we will inevitably discover, we will make it available to the mass as a free-market product for all to use as is fit—patented and priced at a much higher level, of course. To help pay for all this research. No matter how hard we've tried, however, we can't seem to get past one huge problem:

This stuff smells really rotten

.Johnny No Moniker. PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609, johngeek@hotmail.com



With the alco-holidays right around the corner, I figured I could spend some time this month with some ideas for gift giving, card sending, and meal making. In other words, I'm gonna be the punk rock Mothra Stewart for this month.

I'm going to start with a few sites for the cheap ass among us... virtual greeting cards. They allow you to show someone you really care, without laying out any of your hard earned cash that would be better spent on a case of Oly, Black Label, or (insert regional cheap swill here) beer. There are ton of e-card sites out there, but most of them just suck.

Happy House fanzine, out of the UK, has some pretty nice punk rock e-cards on their website, in addition to the news, reviews, interviews, and the rest that you'd find in a usual fanzine. You can choose from photos of bands like Discharge, DKs, Avengers, Pistols, and more and send a card off to your friend or loved one. Check them out at http://www.happy-house.org.uk/ and click on the "Punks on E-cards" box.

You can also send a bunch of e-cards from some of the larger record company websites, such as Epitaph, Fat Wreck, Honest Dons, and the like. Just check out their respective websites, which are so easy to find that I'm not going to mention their addresses here.

Another fun e-card site, though it hasn't been updated for several months, is AreYouDumb?.com (http://www.areyoudumb.com/) which includes cards for holidays and special occasions. Don't blame me, though, if the person you send one of these to stops speaking to you.

In the same vein, the insensitivity cards at You're Probably Lost (http://www.iamlost.com/features/ecards/) contain heart-warming messages like "Welcome to Our Satanic Cult" and "I'm Sure You'll Get Parole Next Time." In other words, perfect cards for your punk rock buddies.

Assuming that you're over 18 (heh, yeah right), Retro Raunch has some classic nekkid cheesecake postcards you can send to someone you care for. There are some cool old Bettie Page style images here, and some that are a little more hardcore. Visit them at http://www.retroraunch.com/ and scroll down to the postcards link.

I was going to list a bunch of places where you could buy cool punk rock paraphernalia, but I realized that I did that in a column recently, so you can go to the diehippiedie.com website and look it up in the netpunk column archives. Instead, I'm going to turn you on to the only present that you need to buy this year: Punk Rock Baby. That's right, lullaby versions of your favorite 70s punk classics. Visit the website, listen to the samples, and then buy several copies for everyone you know so that they can suffer along with you. Visit http://www.punkrockbaby.com/ today.

Actually, there is one site that I've yet to mention in a column that might be a good place to score some gifts for your buds, or to find something that someone should buy to for the holidays, and that is Essential Media. They are a LA-based company that carries zines, CDs, books, comics, toys, and more. Check out what they have available at http://www.essential-media.com/ .

Oh yeah, I just remembered one other thing you should buy... the new EP from Wire. In my opinion, it is like early Pink Flag-era Wire meets early-Ministry. It is five songs, and it is great. You can get Wire news and download some mp3s of some of the new songs at http://www.pinkflag.com/ . Wotta deal.

As we know, the winter holidays are all about gluttony. That is the true meaning of Christmas and Thanksgiving. With that in mind, you should visit Earthsave International at http://www.earthsave.org/ and pull your head out of your ass. Earthsave International is an organization dedicated to educating people on how the food choices they make can change the planet. Okay, so it is a bit on the hippie side, but it still has a lot of good info that will allow you to make educated choices.

If it is booze recipes you're after, then you can always try the standards at idrink.com or webtender.com, but they have some pretty sick shit (cottage cheese and alcohol? Please!) Instead, go to the Sparechange magazine website at http://www.sparechangemagazine.com/, where you can not only read about hot cars, cool bands, and the like, but you can also visit the Watering Hole archives, where you'll find a bunch of hip recipes sure to make any party a drinkfest.

Gifts, food, and drink—that pretty much sums up the holidays for this punk rocker. Before I wrap things up, though, I have two or three more places on the net that I have to tell you about.

First is the Trouser Press website at http://www.trouser-press.com/ . For those of you too young to remember, Trouser Press was a late-70s and early-80s magazine and they also published a guide to new wave records in the 80s and alternative records in the 90s. Well, they now have most of those books online for free, and have even updated some of the entries. This is a nice site for fans of particular old school bands, or those curious about the history of some of the older punk groups.

If you've never seen Cool and Strange Music magazine, you should go to your nearest indie zine store and insist they find you a copy. That is, assuming that your taste in music is as twisted as mine is. Find out by visiting the Cool and Strange website at http://www.coolandstrange.com/ . From Davie Allan to Spike Jones to Mrs. Miller, Cool and Strange covers all the weird music you can stand.

• Finally, one of the funniest things I've read online in a long, long time has to be "One Hundred Albums You Should Remove From Your Collection Immediately" by Wesley A. Kose at the http://www.jaguaro.org/ . Most of what he says is right on, and even when I disagree with one of his selections, his in-your-face attitude cracks me up. Jaguaro.org has lots of other good stuff, including a column about the passing of Dee Dee Ramone, and a rogues gallery of criminals from the Portland Police Department 100 years ago.

That's going to wrap up this month. You can e-mail me your comments and suggestions to netpunk@diehippiedie.com and you can visit the diehippiedie.com website to check out past and present columns and whatever else I'm up to. See ya.

Last month I wrote about youthful HIV infection. In that column I explained why I believe that today's so-called AIDS educational programs, (which teach abstinence from sex until marriage as the only form of AIDS prevention) are a major cause of the current shocking explosion of new infections among people aged 13 to 24. I asserted that "abstinence-only" education programs are responsible for these new infections because the programs keep young people ignorant about sex. Federal spending for abstinence programs is currently at $102 million per year, with the Bush administration proposing an additional $33 million. I wish I could tell you that this was

merely all about a misguided waste of money. In actuality this is really about young people contracting HIV because they were never taught *how* to have safe sex. They were only told *not* to have sex. The skyrocketing numbers of new infections in young people prove the "abstinence" strategy is worse than just an inadequate miscalculation. It is a dismal failure resulting in widespread new HIV infections in youth the likes of which we have never seen before.

The rising HIV/AIDS numbers can be linked in part by youthful sexual ignorance, but only in part. There are other problems going on here too. As a gay punk rock fan, I have one foot in two different subcultures, and in the punk scene I'm frequently alarmed by the amount of heroin use going on today. You would imagine that this drug's legacy of destruction should be more than enough to convince everyone to stay away. Even people with the most basic knowledge of punk ought to know what this drug did to Sid and Nancy, Johnny Thunders, Kurt Cobain, Darby Crash, GG Allin, Nico, Dee Dee Ramone, and so many more. It's frequent that I get really excited about some promising new band, only to find that they seemed to vanish from the face of the earth. I'll ask someone, "Hey! Whatever happened to such-and-such band? The depressing reply is often, "They broke up after the guitarist got into heroin." That's usually the end. The people who've managed to pull themselves out of that quagmire are so few. If the drug doesn't get 'em, HIV often does. What can be done about it?

We know that needle exchange programs work to stop the spread of HIV. Where those programs exist, new infection rates fall. Needless to say, Bush is opposed to needle exchange just as his father was. It doesn't matter how many reports, studies, or AIDS commissions state the same results about the success of needle exchange programs. It doesn't matter that heroin users display time and time again that they prefer to use clean needles and they *will* use clean needles if the needles are made available to them. It doesn't matter that needle exchange programs are a vital opportunity as a bridge to treatment programs, which could help junkies to get off the junk (*if* the treatment programs are there for them.) None of these facts matter because year after year, these truths have been demonstrated since the early days of AIDS. These truths have always been ignored. Needle exchange programs have never been fully implemented. As a result addicts continue to contract HIV. It's not just the addicts who are affected either, but also the people they have sex with, and often their children too. There is one, and only one reason why Bush and other heartless people are opposed to needle exchange. It is exactly the same reason why they are opposed to comprehensive AIDS education. They are selfishly protective of their own public image. They actually believe that if they show support for needle exchange, the public will misinterpret them as approving of illegal drug use. It's unbelievable, but true. Bush is more than willing to allow thousands of people to become HIV infected in order to preserve his anti-drug public image. He *knows* needle exchange programs have *never* increased illegal drug use. Every AIDS commission after AIDS commission has produced study after study to prove that myth is untrue. Here is another quote from the UN Global AIDS Report:

"When clean needle services were offered in California in the 1990s, the percentage of new initiates into injecting drug use fell from 3% to 1%. Regular users injected less frequently, and needle-sharing decreased by more than 70%. A global review of clean-needle/syringe programs implemented between 1988 and 1993 found that, in 29 cities with needle-exchange programs, HIV prevalence among injecting drug use fell by an average of 5.8% a year, and the number of users did not increase."

Please notice that when addicts are involved in needle-exchange programs, not only does needle sharing decrease, but even needle-use decreases! Why? Because, when you put addicts in regular contact with a health-service program staffed by caring individuals, it is a good motivational first step for addicts towards easing themselves off of drug use entirely. These are the clear irrefutable facts. Bush doesn't care about facts. George W. Bush opposes needle exchange programs. Period. Bush supported his Department of Health (ha!) and Human Services (double ha!) Secretary Tommy Thompson's commitment to continue to uphold President Clinton's ban on federal funding of needle-exchange programs for drug addicts. (Yes—you read that correctly. Clinton opposed needle exchange too!) When Scott Evertz, Bush's director of the Office of National AIDS Policy, protested that the evidence is conclusive that needle exchange saves lives, Bush simply fired him and announced that Joseph F. O'Neill, would be replacing him as the director of AIDS Policy at the White House. It's no surprise that Evertz got canned. He was already at odds with the Bush administration over their push for "abstinence only" sex education and for their attacks on condom usage as an AIDS prevention technique. Dissent is rarely tolerated in the Bush administration, so O'Neill got the job and Evertz got pushed into the background into an invisible no-profile position. O'Neill is a Bush "yes" man and Bush is a selfish man who intentionally allows people to die. Yes, people are dying for no reason other than to protect Bush's self-righteous public image as "Mr. Anti-Drugs." Where is the righteousness in intentionally allowing people to get AIDS and die? I see no righteousness in this. I see only cruel murderous inhumanity.

Politics can kill just as surely as the virus does. The US Government's so-called "war against drugs" has been waged for decades. What positive results have this decades-long "war" brought us? It is a "war" with almost no successes. In fact, the *only* truly successful challenge to the self-destructive culture of drug abuse that I have witnessed in my lifetime did not come from the US Government, but from within the punk rock movement! I think straightedge is a brilliant strategy for combating AIDS. After all, a straightedge never has to worry about having sex while drunk or high and neglecting to use a condom properly… or forgetting to use one at all.

I personally believe that *all* sex must always be done with a totally clear head. Slip-ups when it comes to sex could easily result in HIV infection. The sad truth is that my personal beliefs about the way in which everyone should have sex, and how everyone must stay totally away from all drugs and alcohol don't amount to a hill-of-beans. Just as a singular abstinence-only message with regards to sex will always be a failure, straightedge cannot be forced down people's throats either. There are always going to be people who will not listen to the sXe message. Must these people be condemned to death?

No. The answer is that we all have a responsibility to repeat clear and accurate information about the many ways that drugs kill, and let people make their own choices. If people are wise they will come to the right conclusions themselves if education about drugs is done in a comprehensive and complete way.

"Just Say No" is not enough.

"Just Say No" drug education, just like "abstinence-only" sex education, are both ineffective because neither form of so-called "education" provides information about how to avoid contracting HIV if a person decides to say "yes." When a person says "yes" to injecting drugs, no matter how dangerous and foolish we feel that choice may be, we then have a clear responsibility and obligation to instruct on methods of harm reduction. What is the alternative? Say nothing and allow people to contract HIV? That alternative is unacceptable.

HIV must be stopped. If people are going to have sex—and we *know* they will—then they have to learn how to make sex safer. Likewise, if people are going to do drugs, we have to come up with strategies to reduce the danger. Of course, there are big differences between sex and drugs. Sex is a natural biological urge produced by our own brains. All humans who go through puberty naturally desire to have sex before they ever even become sexually active. Sex isn't unhealthy—it's sexually transmitted diseases that are unhealthy. In stark contrast, no one has an innate, natural craving for drugs. No one craves drugs before they have ever tried them and drugs are always an unhealthy choice. So if you want to be healthy, clear headed, and safe from addiction, AIDS, and death…the best choice is to never even begin to use drugs in the first place. I've known people who shot heroin, became HIV positive, contracted AIDS, and died. This is a torturously awful way to go.

By the way, it's important to mention that the needle doesn't have to be filled with heroin to spread the disease. Needles have spread HIV when shared by athletes to shoot steroids. HIV-contaminated needles can infect you no matter what they are used for. This includes needles used for piercing and tattoos. Considering the popularity of DIY piercings and tattoos among punks, this should be a concern. The last time you had a piercing or tattoo, did you check to make sure the needle was new or

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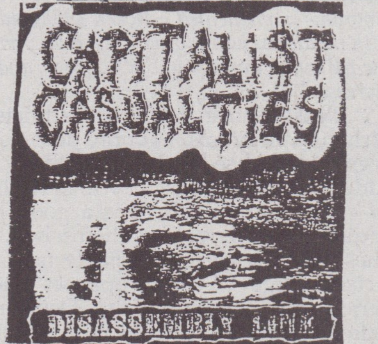

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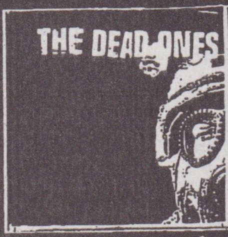

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sterilized? Would you even know how to sterilize a needle?

Obviously, there is no safe way to shoot up with drugs. If you shoot up you are doing yourself harm. If you don't have a needle exchange program nearby where you can get a clean needle, and if you are going to shoot up, the most you can do is what we call "harm-reduction" by trying to clean the needle yourself. Here's how CPS, a grassroots activist organization based in Washington DC suggests you should clean your needle. This procedure should only be used as a last resort, if you are gonna shoot up and have no possible way to get a new clean needle.

1. Fill the syringe with water.
2. Shake it up to rinse it. Tap it to get out any air bubbles.
3. Shoot the water out. Dump out the water. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you can't see any blood.
4. Pour some bleach into a glass. Stick the needle in the bleach and draw the bleach through the syringe up to the top. Leave the needle in the glass of bleach and wait 30 seconds.
5. Shoot the bleach back into the glass. Dump out the glass of bleach so that you do not reuse it.
6. Fill the syringe again with new water, shoot it out and repeat at least three times to make sure you rinse all the bleach out. (Shooting bleach into your veins can cause serious medical problems.)

If you don't have new works, do the same thing with them—rinse with water, soak in bleach for 30 seconds, then rinse again thoroughly with water. Always use new cotton. Try to clean needles and works as soon after use as possible, before blood can clot on them.

Knowledge is power, but now that you have this information it is my hope that you will never ever need to use it. What many irrational people do not want to understand is that making the population aware of this information cannot do harm to a person who has no intention of ever injecting drugs. It will not *cause* a person to want to shoot drugs. I once asked a friend why she tried heroin. The answer (as stupid as this may sound) is because her boyfriend was doing it and he wanted her to try it, and having low self-esteem and the time she agreed to try it. She did not try heroin because she'd heard that needles exchange programs existed, or because someone told her how to clean a needle with bleach as a last resort if she could not find a clean one. Let's get real. This information will not cause someone to try heroin. There are a million sad and self-destructive reasons why a person does that. But this information may possibly prevent a desperate addict who is hell-bent on shooting up from sharing a dirty needle and becoming HIV infected.

If you are not an injecting drug user…do not start! But if you are already injecting drugs, you've got to do everything you can to kick it! Don't wait. Check into a drug treatment program immediately. Drugs are deadly. Drugs and sex together are deadlier still.

Year after year, people working on the AIDS plague get together at an international conference, where scientists, pharmaceutical companies, activists, service agencies, advocates, and government officials discuss the latest developments. This year at the World AIDS 2002 Conference in Barcelona, it was reported that we have now reached the point where 22 million people have died from AIDS worldwide. About 1 million of these deaths are gay men. That means 21 million aren't! These 21 million heterosexuals who died from AIDS weren't all needle users. Although about 3 million people per year die of heterosexually transmitted AIDS, most of these heterosexual HIV infections occurred outside of the United States. That does not mean that heterosexually transmitted AIDS doesn't happen here, even if it hasn't yet happened here in the numbers that we see in other countries in Africa, Asia, and parts of Europe. Do you think it can't *happen* here? Want to risk it? Risking it could mean your life. Some people think only heterosexual women can get AIDS but I've met heterosexual men who contracted HIV through sex. They thought they couldn't get it too. They were wrong.

Still, for whatever reason, at least for now in the USA, heterosexually transmitted HIV infections are seen in fewer numbers than homosexually transmitted HIV infections (Although heterosexually transmitted infections are rising and have risen steadily since the beginning of AIDS.) Homosexual people have particular issues regarding HIV. Although there was a time in this country when the numbers of new HIV infections in gays were falling dramatically, that time, sadly, has passed.

Next time: Homosexuality and AIDS.

"Yo, what click ya in?" asked the huge guy with the aluminum softball bat, as he beat it against his palm.

"Um, click?" I asked, freezing and drunk, standing on the sidewalk of 10th Street between Avenue A and B.

"Yeah, homeboy," said another guy, who was holding a knife, "you know, what gang?"

"Gang?" I repeated, stupidly, and in shock. I was surrounded by about six guys. Big guys. And they looked dangerous. As did the weapons in their hands.

"Yo," yelled the guy with the gun, "We are only gonna ask you one more time. Why you wearing colors?"

I looked down at my motorcycle boots. Black. I looked down at my jeans. Black. I looked at my shirt. Black. I looked at my leather jacket. Black, with US Pins.

"I'm wearing black," I said sheepishly, and almost at the point of tears, "it's punk rock."

Suddenly some guy starts to feel my leather jacket. He touches it. Strokes it. Then starts to squeeze it. I figure he has a cow fetish.

"He ain't carrying," says the cow boy.

"Yo," says the guy with the bat, "take off your colors."

I look at him and say nothing. I'm confused.

"Your colors," he yells, pointing at my leather jacket, and the little air freshener thing I have hanging off the right shoulder. It's lots of bright colors and is made of yarn. With a smelly thing. I wore it just to piss off my band.

"That's an air freshener," I said to the guys, somewhat relieved. They wouldn't kill me cause I was wearing the equivalent of fuzzy dice on my jacket.

"Take off your colors now," said the guy with the gun, "Or we'll kill you. Then take them off."

"Take my wallet," I said, giving them my official Spiderman red and blue wallet. With the web artwork.

"The jacket or your life," was the answer I was given.

"Take anything, anything but that," I said, and almost began to cry.

"Now or never," he said.

And it was then I was faced with the same decision I was forced to face years earlier. My leather jacket or my life. It was a tough call.

It was a bright winter day when Nick, my stepdad, took me to Orchard Street to get my first leather jacket. I was around eighteen at the time, and was so excited I was actually shaking.

"When we get in the store, George," Nick explained, "act like you really want the motorcycle jacket."

"I do," I said back.

"I know you do," said Nick, "but when the guy tells us the price, act disinterested. Like it's too much. We'll haggle and get the jacket cheaper."

"Can't we just do like mom said and buy it?" I asked Nick.

"Barbara doesn't know that these guys will sell you the shirt off their backs. They'll come down. But we might have to walk out of the store."

"Nick, let's just pay them what they want. I want a leather jacket. I wanna be a Ramone."

"You'll be a Ramone, George, but let me haggle, it's my specialty," said Nick.

So I had to let Nick do his thing. Besides, it was his money. My parents were buying me a gift. And back in those days, it was an expensive gift.

Nick and I walk into a few stores on Orchard Street, and see tons and tons of motorcycle jackets. I try a few on, and look at myself in the mirror.

"Ramone, Georgie Ramone," I'd whisper under my breath.

We hit a few more stores, and finally found one with the perfect jacket. It was made of tough leather, and the right size collar, and the exact number of zippers a punk rocker should have.

"This is the jacket," I said to Nick, as I modeled it for him in the store by striking Johnny and Joey poses.

"Okay George," said Nick, "what's the price?"

I looked at the tag and told him. It was around three hundred and fifty bucks. But it was a Schott. The best make. The Ramones brand.

Nick went and got a sales guy as I stood there in the jacket, feeling like the king of the world.

"We want this jacket here," said Nick to the guy, "and we ain't gonna pay a lot for it."

"What is the price, sir?" asked the sales guy with a heavy Yiddish accent.

"It says three fifty, how low you gonna go?" said Nick.

"If it says three fifty, it's three fifty," replied the salesman.

"Up the street they got them cheaper, we'll just go there," said Nick.

"Okay," said the guy, "Three twenty five."

"Two fifty," said Nick, in a bold haggling move.

"No way," said the sales guy, "Three fifteen and tax."

They continue to haggle some more and I start to get real nervous. What if the guy gets pissed at Nick and kicks us out. Then I'll never have a leather jacket and be a Ramone. Those US pins I purchased at Weiss & Mahoney will go to waste.

"Three hundred plus tax," says the sales guy, "and that's my final offer."

"No tax," Nick replies.

"No."

"Okay then, we are leaving," says Nick.

Nick makes me take off the jacket and give it to the guy.

"But Nick," I start to say, and feel tears begin to well up in my eyes.

"We are leaving now, George," he says. I wished my mom had come with us.

"Bye," says the sales guy as we make our way to the front door.

I feel the tears start to slide down my cheeks, and a ball of hate knot up inside of me for Nick. Why'd he have to be so cheap. Such a Jew. At least the stereotype of one.

I open the door to exit the store and hear the little bell ring on top. Good-bye leather jacket.

"Three hundred, no tax," yells the sales guy from behind us. I look at Nick and see a smile crack on his face.

"I told ya so," he said, smiling.

When I returned to Florida after winter break with my leather jacket, I was the punk rock king of Tallahassee. I'd wear my leather jacket from the time I woke up in the morning to the time I went to sleep. I'd wear it at breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and to class my junior year of high school. All the jocks wanted to beat me up, and all the cheerleaders secretly had the hots for me. I know. They'd tell me. Then their football player boyfriends would tell me too. And that if I even looked in their girlfriend's direction, my face would be one with the pavement. So, needless to say, my leather jacket didn't get me much action in high school. But it impressed all the stoners or "freaks" who hung out on "freak hill." I'd smoke lots of pot with them, and then we'd all sing "I Wanna Be Sedated."

By the next school year, my senior one, I was known as the guy with the leather jacket. Some teachers called me James Dean. Some Elvis. Some Hell's Angel. But most just called me asshole under their breath.

"Hey Tabb," said my pal Louis as he put mushrooms and peppers on a pizza at the Italian joint he worked at in the Timberlane Mall.

"Yeah Cinelli, you sorry ass sucker," I said back to him as I coughed up a pile of phlegm and spit it on the pizza he was making.

"I gotta get me one of them leather jackets like you. I wanna be Louie Ramone," he explained.

I told him they were very expensive, but I heard that you could buy fake ones in New York for real cheap.

"Fake ones?" he said, as he too coughed up some phlegm, spit it on the pizza, then added some snot to it by holding his finger over one nostril and blowing.

"Yeah," I said, "Naughahyde, pleather, vinyl, fake, phony, whatever."

"How much those cost Tabb?" he asked.

"I dunno, but they're cheap. I've seen them on 14th Street, under twenty bills."

Louis told me he had to have one. I told him he had to come to New York to get one. He did.

"Look at Louis's jacket, mom," I said to my mom and Nick in their bedroom/living room/dining room/TV room/ art gallery, in their apartment on West 4th Street.

Louis turned around like a real fashion model and my parents "oohed" and "ahhed."

"You look very handsome," said my mom to Louis.

"Why thank you Mrs. Tabb," said Louis, blushing.

"Gurwitz, but call me Barbara, OK?" she replied.

"Thanks Barbara," said Louis. And my mom just smiled.

"What about me?" I screamed. I was standing next to Louis. In my jacket. And mine was real.

"You look like a sissy," said Nick, smiling.

"You look very handsome too, sweetie," said my mom, and then gave Louis and I a kiss each on the cheek, "now you two better get going to the Ritz, the bands are bound to start soon."

We said our good-byes and made our way over to the Ritz on 11th street between 3rd and 4th Avenue. Every time we'd pass a mirror, we'd look at ourselves. We were freezing cold, what with only t-shirts and leather jackets, excuse me, jacket, but we both looked great with the US Pins and all.

"I feel like a real Ramone dressed like this and being in New York," said Louis.

I told him he was. That he was Louie Ramone. He smiled.

We got to the Ritz, paid our two dollars to get in because it was "Rock and Roll Against Depression" night, and saw Huey Lewis And The News. They rocked. And they gave us free buttons and beer after they played. Louis and I and the five other people in the place really enjoyed them.

As we left the Ritz, and started to make our way back to my parents house, Louis and I zipped up our jackets. I was wearing a "Sid Vicious Burger" t-shirt under mine, and Louis was wearing "Rocket To Russia" under his. The one with the pinhead on the rocket. A kick ass shirt.

We made our way down 4th Avenue to 10th Street, and took a right. We started to walk down 10th when two guys behind us yelled for us to wait up. We did.

"Hey guys," said one of the two, who both looked Hispanic, what with their little mustaches. I was jealous. I had tried growing one for years, and the most I got was Italian Grandma fuzz.

"What's up?" Louis and I said at the same time. We both felt like cool New Yorkers in our leathers. Leather.

"Jinx," we then both yelled.

The two guys just looked at us funny.

"Hey," says the other guy, "one of you guys got a light?"

I tell them I do, and start to reach in my pocket to find my "Tallahassee Lassie" lighter.

The next thing I know I'm lying face down in a pile of snow. I pull my head up and notice the snow is very dark. I pick up a clump of it and see it is soaked with blood. I turn around and see Louis, jacketless, standing next to the two guys, one of which has a lead pipe, the other, a knife.

"They want our jackets, George," said Louis, crying.

"They wanth whath?" I mumbled, then touched my mouth and found it swollen and bloody.

"They want our leather jackets," exclaimed Louis, "give them yours so they don't kill us."

I stood up and looked at the two guys.

"Taketh myth thwallet," I spit out.

"Yo man, we want your leather," said the guy with the knife, "take it off and we won't kill you. You're friend was smart, he already gave us his."

"That'sth causth this this thfake!" I yelled.

They both looked at the jacket, then felt mine.

"We don't care," explained the guy with the pipe, "take it off now or I'm gonna slug you again. We want your jacket. Now," and with that, he punched me in the stomach.

"Fuck you, pussithies," I yelled. These guys weren't gonna take my leather jacket. My pride and joy. My symbol of my undying love for punk rock and The Ramones. Fuck these guys.

Suddenly I feel a lead pipe against my head again, and the next thing I know I'm lying on a car hood, face up, with the two guys staring down my throat.

"Take off the jacket motherfucker, or we'll cut you," said one of the guys, then put a knife to my throat.

I thought about taking it off. And maybe I should have. But I didn't. I wasn't gonna give these assholes the satisfaction. Or the three hundred dollars with no tax.

"George, please, give it too them," I heard Louis sob.

"Killth meth," I spit at them, then somehow broke out of their grip and lunged for one of their throats. I got him and knocked him up against the wire fence.

That was the last thing I remembered before waking up, again, face down in the snow. This time, jacketless.

I sat up and looked at Louis, he was standing there, freezing in his "Rocket To Russia" t-shirt, sobbing.

"They took our jackets," he cried.

"Ourth?" I said, then reached for the sleeves of my jacket. They were gone, as was the rest of it.

"How could you leth them thake thour thackets?" I yelled at Louis.

"Tabb, they could have killed us, you are lucky you are alive," yelled Louis, back at me.

I looked down and saw blood all over my "Sid Vicious Burger" t-shirt and jeans. And snow. And my face hurt. And I began to feel the cold.

"Thoney theather thacket thwearer," I spit at Louis, and we made our way home. Deeply depressed.

Five months later I got my second leather jacket. My mom and Nick had wanted to go get me one the next day, but I wouldn't let them. I didn't want another jacket. I didn't wanna be a Ramone. Ramones got beat up. Ramones got lead pipes against the side of the head.

So I got a red James Dean satin jacket. I wore it for a while, but grew jealous of friends who had their own leathers, and eventually wound up getting another. This time when Nick and I went into the store on Orchard Street, I knew what Nick was gonna do, and didn't panic when we actually left the store and walked out onto the sidewalk. The sales guy finally came outside and said, "OK, two fifty, no tax."

A few years later after a False Prophets rehearsal, I zipped up my second leather jacket, and made my way out of our studio, which is now The Lakeside Lounge on Avenue B.

As I walked up 10th Street between B and A, I felt the cold winter air against my face, hands, and nuts. I could feel them shrinking up to peanut size.

I could also feel the alcohol inside my bladder begin to push. I had drank a few bottles of Bud in the studio, and now it wanted out. I walked quickly, aiming for a bar called "Downtown Beirut," on 1st Avenue and 10th Street. I knew one of the bartenders who always gave me free booze.

"Yo, what click are ya in?" asked big guy with a bat.

I looked at him and all his friends. They were big. And had weapons.

They kept asking me what click I was in, and eventually I figured out they meant gang. I explained to them that I was a punk rocker, and not in a gang. They didn't believe me and wanted me to take off my jacket.

I told them to take my wallet, and eventually it came down to my jacket or my life. Again.

"You guys really don't want this jacket, do you?" I said.

"Now," was the answer.

"But it's got US pins on it, and buttons, and it's been painted on, and it's old. You don't want it," I said.

The guy with the bat beat his palm, then I saw the gun begin to rise to my head.

So I thought about it. Long and hard. I had had my first jacket taken, and been stripped of my punk rock pride. I was depressed for months, but eventually got over it. I'd get over this. But it'd take months.

"No," I said.

"What'd you say, homeboy?" the guy with the gun said.

"I said no." And I meant it. I wasn't gonna let these guys take what wasn't theirs. This was my jacket. Mine. A jacket my mom and Nick got for me. My Ramone jacket. If I gave it to them, they'd win. And besides, I had seen these thugs around before, and knew I'd see them again. I couldn't bear the thought of seeing them in my jacket.

"So, you are saying you want to die," said the guy with the aluminum softball bat.

Then something inside of me snapped. Maybe it was because my first jacket got stolen. Maybe it was because I was drunk. Or maybe it was because I was just sick of being a victim. I think it was because I was drunk.

"OK guys," I said calmly, as I reached into my pocket slowly and pulled out a cigarette, then lit it.

"I'll give ya the jacket if you want it so bad," I explained very slowly and clearly, "but tomorrow, I will go out and buy a gun, then hunt each of you down, and put a bullet in your heads."

And at that time I meant it. I wasn't kidding. I would go get a gun, and kill them all, Dirty Harry style. I'd snapped.

"Yo man, what you talkin' bout, you ain't gonna kill us," said the guy with the gun still pointed at my head.

I inhaled deeply, then exhaled.

"Oh yeah," I said, quietly, "I will."

They all looked at one another, then me. I just puffed on my cigarette, narrowed my eyes into slits, and looked back at them. Standing corpses, if they dared to take my jacket.

"Yo man, you insane," said one of the guys.

"Yeah," said another, "that boy is whacked."

I said nothing but looked at them. The guy with the gun dropped the weapon.

"Now," I said, "I'm gonna walk out of here, real slow. If you want my jacket, take it. But kill me. Because if you don't, I'll kill you."

I started to step forward and one of the guys blocked my way. I stared at him. Right in his eyes. And thought about how he'd look with his brains painting a brick wall. He stepped aside.

I began to make my way up the sidewalk, slowly, smoking the cigarette. I heard them talk behind me.

"Yo man, that guy is a fucking nut. He be insane. Let's leave him alone," said a first voice.

"I say we take his jacket and kill him," said another voice.

"Yo man, you insane," said the first voice.

I kept walking slowly, without looking back, trying to be as calm as possible. Finally I made it to the next corner, and then the next.

"Hi George," said my bartender friend from behind a Rolling Rock and Budweiser tap.

I waved at her as I entered the bar. I was too much in shock to talk.

"What's that all over your pants," she said, "ya spill beer on yourself again?"

I looked down and saw my jeans were soaked. I touched them and then smelled my hand. Urine. I had totally pissed in my pants.

"Um, yeah, beer," I said.

She just smiled, then poured me a pint.

Last night I saw Dean Dean And The Sex Machines at The Continental. And they rocked. After their set, the band and I walked out onto St. Marks Place and hung out. Some big scary guy came walking up to us, and started asking us about our leather jackets. At first I thought he was going to try and mug us, but he was just some foreign guy who wanted to know where to buy one. I told him Orchard Street.

As he walked away, I thought about what I would have done if he had indeed try to mug us. And I knew the answer. I'd give him the damn jacket. Hell, they are so cheap now I got a closet full of them. All motorcycle style. All with US pins. Some old, and some new. And at under a hundred dollars now, they are cheaper then a good pair of sneakers.

My leather jacket still holds a lot of meaning for me. Punk Rock. The Ramones. My incredible journey from childhood to adolescence to childhood again. But not as much meaning as my life. I was too blind to see that years ago. But now I do.

But if anyone was to ever fuck with my PlayStation2, Xbox, GameCube or GameBoyAdvance…

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. Dukenukem@georgetabb.com
2. Dean Dean And The Sex Machines rule. So do The Kick. But don't tell them I said so.

3. It's over a year now since 9/11—and so much has changed—yet, nothing has. I wish the world would stop being upside down.

Induction

Hail Maximum RockNRollers. I've been bummed. But I'm on my way back up! Shit can *always* get worse, but I guess it can get better too. What turned me around this month was the new LATTERMAN full length. I was sitting in my car, reeling from an attack of panic. Looking for some sort of distraction or familiarity, I put in the LATTERMAN CD. As the panic subsided, I was expecting the usual post-freakout depression and self-loathing. Instead, I heard some really good friends belting it out about things like the power of friendship, DIY, self worth, and community. For whatever reason, I thought, "fucking a, maybe I *can* do this." I smiled. How about that?

Hi, How Are You?

Daniel Johnston. I mentioned him a few months back in the endnotes of this column. I said something about the possibility that he was schizophrenic. When that came out in print, I realized that was a pretty weird thing to say. Throwing around psychiatric diagnoses for folk singers you don't know shit about as an afterthought in widely distributed magazines is not cool. So, I'm sorry I said that stuff.

Daniel Johnston is some of the best shit I've ever heard. It's so honest and sad. It expresses nervousness, frustration, perseverance, defeat, love, and happiness, fucking everything. And it does so in this jarring starkness that has affected me on a really physical gut level. I fucking love this shit. Most of the early stuff is what I dig the most. It's just this guy Daniel with a chord organ recorded on a boom box.

So, after searching on the Internet, I found out more about him. Tons of shit actually. It turns out that he does suffer from mental illness, and that fact is widely written about. He's got what used to be called manic depression, or what is now called Bipolar Disorder. For me the guy is really special because he expresses a range of emotions that I feel a lot, being a mentally ill dude. And he expresses them in a way that's really, really, really, fucking great and honest and up-front. Fuck, it's hard to explain. I guess you just need to hear this shit.

Here are some addresses. You can get his early tapes from Stress Records. You can write them at Stress Records, 4716 Depew, Austin, TX 78751. They are on the Internet at www.museumoflove.com and strest@aol.com.

There's also a book that details a lot of Daniel Johnston's history. It features tons of his art and lyrics, and chronicles the mythology set forth in his stuff. You can get that from Soft Skull Press. You can track the book down through them at 71 Bond Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217, or get it online at www.softskull.com.

1-800-I-Hate-My-Life

So, a few months back I mentioned how I broke down and ordered some weird inspirational tapes or some shit from a toll free number on the radio. It was from the Midwest Center for Stress and Anxiety. They advertise on the radio. It was a free trial. I just had to spring for the shipping to get this cardboard box of books, cassette tapes, and VHS's here. It was like 13 bones. All I had to do was send it back within a month. So, I figured I'd get it here and check it out, and then have some shit to write about for the column. And, fuck, I guess I thought it might be "the answer," or some shit. Of course I am skeptical, but shit, I can still hope, right?

So, it's like two months later and I'm looking at the fucking thing right now. I don't even want to tell you how much this thing cost me. Once it got here, the fucking thing terrified me. I opened the box once. I didn't want to send it back, because that would totally reinforce the idea that I never do shit for myself to get better. But I didn't want to look at it either, because like a lot of the time, I was never really in the mood to deal with the mound of shit that is my relationship to my mental illness. So, I'm looking at six payments of $69.98. Fuck me.

I'd give up a few fingers to never have to deal with panic and agoraphobia again. But something tells me that this 400 bucks isn't going to do that. In fact, I don't think it'll do shit. Whatever I guess. I need to do something, but I have no fucking clue what it is. Or maybe I do, I don't know. Fucking a.

Lease a Car, Leave Your Shrink

Who has seen this commercial? It's weird. It's a guy leaving a message for his shrink while he's on the cell phone in his new car. Basically, he explains that since he got his new car, he doesn't need the shrink anymore. When I first heard the MINUTEMEN singing about how psychological methods to sell products should be destroyed, I had no idea that it would come to this! A lot of people say that mental illness in our country is an epidemic. I guess I shouldn't be surprised that some weasely advertising executive got hip to marketing shit to such a large demographic. Not only can this car get you from one place to another, but it's the answer to all your problems too. Fuck.

Love Defined.

I make notes of things that I think of for the column sometimes. So this month when I sat down and looked at my notes I saw a line that said, "Love / Nate Wilson / Doh." Weird. A few seconds later I remembered what it was about and thought to myself, "Fuck, it's come to this, hasn't it?" It sure has.

A few years ago I read one of Nate Wilson's columns in *Heartattack*. He's the guy who used to be in DEVOID OF FAITH and MONSTER X. Anyway, from what I remember, the basic jist of shit was that he was getting older, and was feeling pretty discouraged about love. At the time, I thought a 750-word pontification lamenting love from the Albany scenester was pretty funny. But now, as I'm rounding the corner on 26 and a half, I'm not really laughing. I'm more like twitching in horror and shit.

The point that Nate made was that an older dude in the scene has some problems in the love department. When you are dedicated to and consumed by punk and hardcore, it's kind of hard to relate to people. That situation is complicated by the fact that most of the people in the scene that you *can* relate to are a lot younger. So, love. What the fuck?

A lot like the 1998 Nate Wilson, the 2002 Wells Tipley is fucking stressing about love! Complicating my specific situation is the mental illness shit. If I'm going to find someone to be with for a long haul, I'm going to want someone who understands me. That's a tall fucking order! That means I need a woman with an intimate knowledge of pain and misery. Of course, I don't want to be with someone who is miserable. So that narrows it down to people who used to be miserable. Now, why would someone who *used* to be miserable want to pair up with a *still*-miserable fuck like me? Not to mention the weird co-dependant shit that comes up in a relationship involving a person who is mentally ill.

Yeah, exactly. If I did find a person, there is a whole set of problems with me being in a relationship. What the fuck do I bring to the table? You have responsibilities in a relationship. I can't do a lot of shit because of Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia. A lot of the things that a woman would reasonably expect from me in a relationship, I wouldn't be able to fulfill. Fuck, whatever. This shit is a lot more complicated than I'm letting on, I think. I'm really kind of scared about what will happen, though, you know? I'm a lonely dude.

How was that for talking myself into inevitable loneliness? I get pretty wily with my negative cognitions. But I guess the truth of the matter is that I still sort of have my chin up about it all. "I live for love," that's what Daniel Johnston says. Jesus Christ.

Wow. So, I know there are fuckers out there thinking exactly what I was thinking when I first read that other guy's column. But fuck you, dudes. Wait 'til 2006. You'll either be driving an SUV, halfway to your CPA or you'll have problems like me.

Metal Mailbag

I got some great mail this month. There was tons of shit in response to the column focusing on RHAPSODY.

Although, I have to say my favorite letter was from Craig over in Australia. This is the second letter I've gotten from him, and I'm pumped. He's a dude who came out on top of the Panic Disorder / Agoraphobia game. So his input and perspective is always great to hear. Anyway, on with the mailbag.

Omar from Villain Records in Las Vegas is guy out there who is doing trades for his stuff and signing his letters off with MANOWAR lyrics. "I'm an animal, there's an animal in me. I'm gonna set it free." Get in touch with this guy at villainrecords@yahoo.com.

Doug from Iowa sent me some mail. He clued me into tons of fantasy metal stuff. He tipped me off to a band called DEMONS AND WIZARDS, with dudes from BLIND GAURDIAN and ICED EARTH. I haven't heard it yet, but I will be picking it up sometime this week!

I got a totally mint piece of mail this month from Pete over in Lowell, MA. Dude writes me up saying that he thought, "it was pretty fucking radical" that I wrote about fantasy metal heroes, RHAPSODY. Hail and Kill, Pete! He also suggested that I check out other metal warriors, BLIND GAURDIAN and FALCONER. I can definitely vouch for BLIND GAURDIAN being a total fucking treat on the ears, but FALCONER I haven't heard yet.

Hey, while I'm talking about fantasy metal, I'd also like to throw THY MAGESTIE, DARK MOOR, STRATVARIUS, DRAGONLAND, LUCA TURILLI and EDGUY out there as other shit to check out. Man, it's really refreshing to be interested in such a thoroughly uncool style of music again.

Take My Life, Please

OK, who read my column last month? I had some serious writers block! Fuck. So, I just copied this letter from my shrink. I thought the letter was pretty funny. But, really you should have seen me trying to come up with shit to write about, it was a mess. That was the real comedy. All I could picture was those totally douchie columns that people do that start out all, "I don't know what to write about it, but my column is due in three hours." I hate those fucking things. Anyway, I tried to write a funny story. That's how desperate it was. I finished the fucker too. Thankfully, I had the presence of mind not to put it in. Unfortunately, I don't have the presence of mind not to put it in this time around! Here goes. Go!

I was pacing around my parents' house the other day thinking about Nazi Germany. I must have been antsy about something. Maybe I had too many cookies. The sugar always fucks me up. That, along with the sheer volume of hours I spend in front of the History Channel on TV, sometimes spark these episodes.

Anyway, I was shuffling from room to room mulling over the Sig Heil. In specific I was thinking about the varying degrees of enthusiasm that the German people offered up their beloved arm gesture. You know, like in the newsreels you'd see like 17- year-old dudes with a stern and calculated Sig Heil. Or there is the 20-something woman all gushy over her Fuhrer, frantically throwing her straightened palm out toward him. Yet, still you have the graying father-type who exerts the exact extent of emotion required in his Sig Heil to appear down for the Aryans. Most puzzling of all to me is Hitler. This guy's Sig Heil is so weird and understated. It almost seems like he's too cool for the Nazis or something. Fuck, anyway, this isn't really the point of the story.

My brain is fucking racing around the house with my body in tow. It's like I have one of the History Channel newsreels on fast forward in my head. This is getting to be a total drag so I decide to head down to the mailbox and check for mail. I just needed something to snap me out of it. On my hike down to the street, I still can't shake it. I have this nagging feeling that I'm approaching some sort of conclusion about the Sig Heil. As I'm walking I continue to picture each of about ten types of Sig Heils that I've isolated and categorized.

By the time I reach the mailbox I scrap the project and decide there's nothing to it. I grab the mail and start to walk back up the driveway. As I finish up flipping through the mail, my consciousness sort of migrates from my head back to reality. I look up to see my next-door neighbor sitting by a kiddy pool looking absolutely horrified.

He had a look on his face like he just saw his 26-year-old, living-with-his-parents shaved head neighbor who drives a Volkswagen, goose-step down to get his mail while trying out a bunch of different styles of the Sig Heil to a pretend crowd of neo-fascists.

Fuck. Like I need this kind of shit. Jesus.

OK, that was that. It was kind of funny, right? It just wasn't funny enough. I mean it's true, and it's probably funny enough to mention to a friend or whatever. But it's not a funny enough story to carry 350-plus words. Fuck, it was like this crumby two-bit George Tabb rip-off kind of thing. All it was missing was the weird flashback thing at the beginning. "Fuck. Like I need this kind of shit. Jesus." That might as well have been, "Doh. Take my life, please." I hope I never get writers block again. Because if I do, I'm skipping a month, I'm not putting anyone through having to read some shit like that.

Concussion

Fucking a. "Screw all their negativity!" That's what SCHOLASTIC DETH says, so that's what I'll be trying to do next month. In the DIY file I'll have pointers on making up the evil and gross slice of paper known as the one sheet. And on the mental illness side of things, I'll have some of my personal experiences with shrinks. Hopefully I'll glean some wisdom out of that shit and impart some righteous and gnarly advice on head shrinking. Fucking advice. I hate advice.

***

Past "Oh Man What The Fuck!?!??!" columns are available on the web at www.trafficviolation.com.

Positivity isn't in my dictionary but negativity is: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or e-mail me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

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END NOTES:

1. Yes, I did refer to myself in the third person while talking about love. I think it has something to do with being so horrified and defeated about it, that I don't even want to refer to myself as "I" or "me."
2. I alphabetized all my records. It felt fucking great.
3. Some dudes from Long Island made a 45-minute long documentary on the Long Island DIY scene. It features a lot of the Long Island bands that I love, and a lot of my friends. If you non-Long Islanders want more information on this shit, check out www.walklor.com, or my site at www.trafficviolation.com.
4. Being a total fucking nerd, I looked up the issue of *Heartattack* that I was talking about in the column. It was issue #20 from November of 1998. I have boxes of old *MaximumRockNRoll*, *Heartattack*, *Punk Planet*, and other zines cataloged in my basement. Most of them are in date order too. Wow, right?
5. Corporate punk really fucking stinks and totally bums me out. Down with the Warped Tour and up with basement shows.

This month's column was submitted by a punkmama I met at one night of the *MRR* 20th Anniversary shows. We'd never met before, but had plenty to talk about and I'm glad she took me up on the request for her to contribute. Here it is....

Oh, I know I've mentioned the anarchist parenting email list before, so here's mention of another one I recently got tuned into. If any of you punk parent types are looking for other similarly minded parents to share info with and whatnot, then subscribe to punkparents@yahoo.com

As always, punkparents get in touch. Jessica / PO Box 12839 / Gainesville, FL 32604 or yardwideyarns@hotmail.com. And you can send a buck to get the first or second year's worth of columns in zine format.

****

I never liked babies. I wasn't (and still am not) one of those people that enjoys baby talk, and I really don't think that most babies are cute or interesting. I didn't ever hold a baby until I was six months pregnant, and when I did, it was because I was pretty much forced to. I never thought about having babies, either. I was too busy partying and going to shows and playing music and working and stuff. But when my relationship with my love, Danny, started heading towards a long term commitment (i.e. marriage!) we discussed having kids and it just seemed right and important. I mean, there are so many people having children for the wrong reasons, why not make a planned decision to have a couple of children for the right reasons, like being able to teach them things that it took us years to figure out and hope to raise responsible adults with a desire to help save the earth instead of add to its destruction? We carefully figured out a good time to conceive, and got lucky the first time. My pregnancy was uneventful. I felt good, I read lots of pregnancy manuals so that I knew what was going on with my body and

the developing fetus the whole time, and I started to actually look forward to having a helpless, crying human to nurture.

We were at a Food Not Bombs benefit when I felt my daughter move for the first time. Fugazi, one of my long time favorite bands, was playing, and I was overjoyed not only that I could feel her, but also that she had chosen that particular moment to make her presence known. It seemed like a good sign. The reality of impending motherhood struck me, and I was thrilled.

Life during pregnancy, up until that point, had been pretty much the same as before, minus the partying of course. I was still going to shows, and aside from the nauseating smell of cigarette smoke which had me running outside for air every couple of songs, I was doing fine. Then one night when I was about eight months along, Danny and I went to see ...And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead. We sat at the bar and listened to the opening bands without incident. As the ...Trail Of Dead launched into their first song, the baby within me went nuts! She must have had her own mini pit going on in there! I felt elbows and ankles and knees everywhere! It really freaked me out, and I realized that things were changing. Soon I'd have to exchange my long nights filled with loud rocking music for long nights filled with rocking a loud baby! What had I gotten myself into?

Before our wedding, married friends had pulled me aside to tell me how much would change after the "big day." Those friends didn't have any children. Having children changes things a million times more than signing a piece of paper, performing a ceremonial ritual and then celebrating with your friends. Having children changes your needs, your focus, and way you spend every minute of your day. The baby *always* comes first. I realized this as soon as Makena Shore entered the world, which happened to be at the time of the thieving of the presidency. My obsession with politics had helped me get through the seemingly endless wait to go into labor as my due date passed me by without a sign of a contraction. A week overdue, I went and voted against the son of the evil man I had rallied against in the early 90s. The last thing I wanted was for my daughter to be born into a world run by the "idiot son of an asshole" as Fat Mike so eloquently puts it. Three days later, my baby arrived (with a lot of work on my part) in the midst of the joke of a recount. Jeb Bush had ensured the election would go to his brother, an event which would ordinarily have driven me into a frenzy of anarchistic discourse. But here I had this beautiful, innocent little girl to look after who knew nothing of corruption and deception, so I pushed aside my contempt for the way our government "works" in favor of unconditional love and devotion to my daughters' needs.

I believe that the most important thing a mother can do is to be there for the child as much as possible. My husband and I are lucky to have opposite work schedules so we don't have to co-op child care or find some other outside help in raising Makena. I like to spend my days enriching my baby's life through reading and playing and exploring. As she gets older, we both need to spend more time doing things on our own. I mean, shit, I do still want to have a life, but I also consciously take the time to expose her to new and stimulating experiences.

So I thought that moving a block away from the zoo would be cool for my then 19-month-old tiny terror, Makena Shore. There's a great playground, a carousel, a "family farm" children's petting zoo (complete with the all-important duck pond), and of course, all those animals. And there's nothing Makena likes more than to bring me or her daddy one of her animal books, point to one of those boldly drawn, brightly colored creatures and show us in her own way that she recognizes the intended image. "Hhurrrumph," she wails, swinging her little arm in front of her like a trunk, pointing to the elephant. "Rrrrarh," she snarls with a feisty little flick of the wrist while staring at the majestic cat on the page. Living so close to all these different living things would really put things in perspective for her, I thought.

As soon as the stress of moving wore off, it was time to check out Makena's new wonderland. I'd heard from a friend that had worked there that the San Francisco zoo was actively rehabilitating wounded birds and animals as well as creating new habitats that better suited the residents, so my hesitation to support an organization that keeps naturally wild animals contained in unreasonably small areas for the benefit of human entertainment was kept at bay. I stepped up to the membership counter and purchased a year family pass at a very reasonable price. Having been to the zoo once before when my little girl was still in utero, I remembered that the playground was pretty cool, and the pass would be worth that alone, considering that all the other playgrounds in the new 'hood are the old, rusty metal kind.

We walked into the entrance and Makena immediately wanted to be released from the confines of her stroller. She must have felt the excitement of all the other little ones around her. I let her out, and off she ran. Oh, I couldn't wait to see her interact with the animals, so I quickly steered her in the direction of the petting zoo. On the way there we encountered a group of Birds of Prey that I had heard were being cared for after being injured in the wild. I could barely contain myself when I saw that the most beautiful, majestic bird there was a buzzard, a real buzzard, not a turkey vulture that most people think of when Buzzard, my marital last name, is mentioned.

"Look Mak, a buzzard! You're a Buzzard too," I almost shouted with pride, for there, underneath, was the description of the bird for which I had searched in the library while still engaged to my future husband. "In North America a vulture is called a buzzard. Everywhere else, including Africa where this buzzard is from, the word 'buzzard' refers to a hawk." I was very excited to think that all the visitors to the zoo would now know that our last name was that of this huge, wondrous bird and not that of the carcass-devouring vulture. Unfortunately, as I looked around, I saw that no-one was paying any attention to any of the birds except for the Bald Eagle which was being fed a mouse. Even my daughter, the baby Buzzard herself, was off and running away from the birds towards a group of small children. As she approached, they took off in the direction of the petting zoo. We followed.

Through the double doors was a "family farm" complete with goats, sheep, horses, a pig, ponies, llamas, and turkeys. How exciting to come face to face with a goat! I couldn't wait to see the look on my baby's face. In we went. A huge smile spread across that cute little face, and she ran over to...another baby! What the..? There were tens of goats and sheep all over the place, and my daughter wanted to pet (or hug actually) a baby? I pulled her off the unsuspecting toddler, apologized to the worried mother, and redirected Makena towards the goat behind her. She patted the goat on the backside and kept moving towards the 2-year-old whose mother had picked her up and moved out of my baby's reach. Had she even seen the goat? Maybe she thought it was stuffed or something. I brought her back over to the goat she had pet, and introduced her to the creature that she had never seen except for on a page of her *Farm Animals* book. It didn't phase her one bit! She looked right into its hungry eyes, gave it a bomp right on the head with her little hand, then looked around for the poor scared child she wanted to hug and kiss.

I decided that it would take a truly magnificent beast to awaken my baby's curiosity, so I put her in her stroller and headed for the elephants. How could she resist those giant animals with the long, swinging trunks that she likes to imitate? On the way there, I pointed out many different species, none of which garnered as much excitement as the many strollers we passed. Each time we shuffled by a tiny human, my daughter enthusiastically pointed and yelled "babies, da babies." I was only grateful that she was strapped in, so she couldn't accost every one of them with her open arms and her smiling, puckered face.

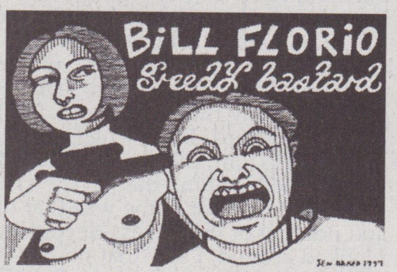
As we approached the center of the zoo, I was pleased to see that there weren't that many children around to distract Makena. I released my squirmy offspring right in front of the elephants, and she looked and pointed just as I had hoped she would. For about five seconds. Five seconds before she was distracted. Five seconds before a little sparrow hopped by and she was off after it. Five seconds was all the pleasure that I got from showing my daughter something new, and I thought, exciting.

So now I know better. It's like they say, you give a baby something pretty in a box, they are sure to like the box better. I've learned that even the everyday grind which often seems boring to me is a source of unlimited enjoyment for a baby. To see such interest in the path of an ant across the living room floor, or such pleasure in the turning off and on of a light switch

really does make you appreciate things a little more. It makes the missed shows and stolen elections less aggravating and it makes me more able to focus on the truly important things that I can do to help my child grow up healthy and strong. Although my life has changed immensely, aside from the tiredness it is an entirely positive change. I can still go to the shows that I really want to see, and I've found that my activism has become more directed and meaningful. Being a mother has made me a better person and I wouldn't turn it in for anything. Watching my daughter grow from a helpless, pooping, eating machine into an independent, curious learning machine gives me unbelievable joy. And it has made me like babies a whole lot more.

If you find yourself in the SF area and want to go to the zoo, email me at garlicgirl@msn.com and we'll go baby chasin'!

—Kyrsten Buzzard



I'll tell ya, my whole life, I've been a pretty good kid. The reason is, I'm totally prone to getting caught. It's not like my mom was running the Yonkers FBI or anything. I also don't have one of those dark clouds over me or anything like that, quite contrary, things usually go my way—well, even if they don't, I'm pretty satisfied with how everything turns out in a very general way. It's just some sort of spiritual clumsiness that follows me around determined to embarrassing me the full extent of the laws of Karma.

When I was 18 or so, I started doing a fanzine. I actually didn't really come up with the idea of doing one; a few other kids I knew were doing one and asked me if I would like to help. About a month later, I suddenly realized that all the work I did would end up as 20 or so nights of solid typing gone to waste if I didn't do everything else needed to finish the first issue of the zine. The other five people either A, didn't really want to do a zine other than to tell people they did a zine or B, wanted to do a zine but didn't own a typewriter, a camera, questions to interview people with, basic common sense, two nights in a row without an acid flashback, or enough money to make a single photocopy. So with the help of two out of six people I got an issue out. By the third issue, I had one person helping me, my friend Ray from Co-op City. Co-op City is sorta like a big housing project in the Bronx except you feel ripped off living there because you actually got suckered into buying an apartment instead of having it handed to you by the housing board.

Where the hell was I? Oh yeah, so in the first issue I interviewed SICK OF IT ALL, and they kept going on and on about how Adam from LIFESBLOOD was handing out flyers calling them sellouts in front of CBGB. So naturally I interviewed Adam and his current band BORN AGAINST. About a month after the zine came out an very angry Pete from SICK OF IT ALL called me up hollering that he wanted BORN AGAINST's address or phone number or something. As I was listening to him rant very loudly in my ear, I proceeded to fold the next issue of my zine which featured a pre-Photoshop cut and paste job of a Motley Crue press photo with swords and fiery pentagram and SICK OF IT ALL's heads pasted where the former Vince and Tommy Lee Anderson once gazed out at readers of *Rip* and *Faces*. The fact that SICK OF IT ALL's real mugs actually showed up in *Rip* and *Faces* a few months later sort of made the whole thing sillier. SICK OF IT ALL were very unhappy. I gasped in horror as I listened to them threaten my life on WNYU radio a few weeks later, and ended up looking over my shoulder for a couple years after that. In the same issue, about a week after the angry Pete call, my dad calls up to my room. Just so you know, my father never answers the phone, never really calls anyone on the phone, and I don't believe has ever had a phone conversation that was more than six words. For some strange reason on a Friday afternoon my dad answered and the call went something like this.

Bill Florio Senior: Yello...

Nihilistic #1: Is this Bill Florio!?

Bill Florio Senior: Yeah,

Nihilistic #1: Well I gotta tell ya, I know where you live, and you got some fucking gall to write that shit about us! I'm in the right state of mind to come right over there and put 16 ounces of steel toes in yer ass...

Bill Florio Senior: Could you hold one sec...

(Off Phone) WILL! Phone call! I think this one is for you.

Me: Hello?

Nihilistic #1: Listen buddy, I don't wanna go to jail for this but I really could come over there and beat yer ass right now.

Nihilistic#2: What is that shit you wrote about us! You should give us the sort of respect coming to us you little fuck!

This was the opening scene of my record reviewing career. Well, at least people were reading the zine.

When I was in high school I worked at another wedding video place. They did mostly lower to middle class Italian and Irish weddings around the Bronx and Yonkers. Every Christmas we'd pull out this out take reel, which featured bridesmaids with no underwear, people throwing up on each other, and people fainting into candles and then bursting into hairspray accelerated flame. When I changed jobs and became head editor at another company, I didn't really get inspired to compile clips together until I got this great shot of grandma involuntarily squeezing her granddaughter's 13-year-old boob. At some point this guy Joe Gervasi, who did *Philly Zine*, asked me if I wanted to perform spoken word at this spoken word show he was putting on. I was like; why the hell would I wanna do that? Who wants to sit and watch people get up and talk about whatever like a second rate comedian? He then confessed that he didn't care if I spoke, he just knew I'm one of the only people in NYC with a car and Mykel Board and Jennifer Blowdryer needed a ride to Philly. So I suggested I show some wedding clips instead of talking. A few months later my friend Joe Martin tells me he saw something called *The Bill Florio Wedding Video* in a certain cult video trade list. It didn't take me long to figure out that Joe Gervasi was selling my video for $15 in his catalog of out-of-print kung fu flicks and such. I called Joe and told him straight, hey, I don't care if you make copies of my video for people, but I don't think it's cool to sell it and I really don't like having my name on the tape! I mean, I could get sued or lose my job if someone watched it and found out I was making fun of their boob-grabbin' grandma. Joe agreed to stop, and he promptly did nothing, I think the video is still in the catalog.

Anyhow, there's this crazy drunken gindaloony brokenenglish barber who works next door to the studio. His name is Valentino and on many a night he can be heard blasting porn in the back of his barber shop while he downs two cases of Budweiser. Every once in a while he storms into the studio and makes demands like "Taka me out to dinner" and "Takea my a picchu." He has also squeezed the asses of my attractive young co-workers and just been a general nuisance; he set off the fire alarm with his smoking, the burglar alarm by banging on the window. The guy's a total wreck; he's probably about 50 but in a state of suspended animation from pickling himself. Anyhow, one day he stomps in with an 8x10 black and white photo of himself taken somewhere around 1978. He's obviously younger considering the tight poly suit pants with the hairbrush prominently shoved in his waistband at the groin area, but still just as creepy looking. He sets it on my desk and says, "Make e big. Make e big" Before he's out the door I have it in the scanner and I'm on the phone with my pal at the t-shirt silk-screening place. Before Valentino is able to display this horrid photo in his window, all my friends are wearing it on a shirt.

One day, I'm doing my laundry on the same street. I go in to put my clothes in the dryer and Valentino is in there washing his barber towels. He's standing there looking at me, I look at him. I turn the dryer on and leave, the guy genuinely creeps me out. About ten minutes later I hear him screaming and running and cursing in Italian. To this day I have no idea why, but I suspect he saw himself flopping around in the dryer and had to douse this foul memory with more domestic beer.

So I'm in the abortion clinic and I have my girlfriend scheduled an hour before the other girl I knocked up and...

I've reached the maximum "I read Bill Florio's column because it's short" level. Exceeding this will take me into the land of "Mykel's columns are good but I never get to the end" or "George Tabb talks about his dog this month" netherworlds.

You must stay tuned next month to hear about the Ugly Guy, Fox Television courting me and the girl with a toothbrush in the ass. Otherwise if you go to http://www.cafeshops.com/cp/store.aspx?s= theshemps there is an offer for a Bill Florio Tote Bag. Email me bill@candids.com

This month, I just have a few random tidbits that caught my attention in the past few weeks. It's interesting to note that, despite the fact that I continually report on the abuses caused by the world's otherwise-splendid corporate citizens, I do not ever run out of fresh news items. I don't know about you, but I call that a pattern.

Many of us don't remember the Great Pesticide Leak of Bhopal, India. In fact, I would be willing to bet that many people have never heard of it all. Here's the story: on the evening of Dec. 3, 1984, a Union Carbide pesticide manufacturing plant in Bhopal, India, sprung a leak of methyl isocyanate which proceeded to kill 4,000 people in just one day. It is estimated that anywhere from 14,000-20,000 people have since died due to injuries stemming from chemical ingestion.

The reason that many Americans don't remember this incident is only to be guessed, but its reasonable to presume that it has something to do with the fact that the overall American population is quite self-centered in world affairs. After all, I think we all know how seriously Americans react when 3,000+ people of their own die at the hands of foreigners. We blind ourselves in red, white, and blue and indiscriminately bomb entire sections of the earth.

Likewise, the incident hasn't been forgiven or forgotten in India. Just days after it happened, Union Carbide's CEO, Warren Anderson visited Bhopal to survey the damages and express condolences. While there, he was arrested by Indian police and served three days in jail before being released on bail. Despite being summoned to court at a later date, he promptly returned to the US, retired from Union Carbide in 1986, and has rarely been seen since. He is facing charges of culpable homicide which, in Indian courts, carry a maximum of ten years in prison and a fine.

On Aug. 28, Indian courts rejected an attempt by the police to reduce the charges against him to a misdemeanor, thereby lessening both his potential sentence and the urgency to extradite him to India. In response, Greenpeace (in cahoots with a London newspaper) did some detective work and found Mr. Anderson living in a New York suburb. AP even went so far as to mention that his "Cape-Cod style house sits on several well-manicured acres, surrounded by a white picket fence, with an American flag hanging from its gate."

When the extradition charges were first brought forth in 1992, Anderson refused to return to India for court, claiming that neither he nor Union Carbide were subject to the jurisdiction of Indian courts. This premise, of course, neglects the fact that the residents of Bhopal were subject to the jurisdiction of UC's toxic fumes and that they should feel free to demand immediate recourse against the company. Under this same ideology, I should be allowed to fly into Brazil, toss a few hand grenades into a crowded square, and leave, claiming that Brazil is not my home, so I don't have to go to court there. Hey, doesn't this now set a precedent that chemical warfare/terrorism is legal? I'm sure Hussein and bin Laden will be psyched.

But, perhaps even more disturbing is the United States' role in all of this. Just like our government's constant attempts to pass "fast track" legislation on trade agreements and our support of organizations like the WTO, both of which hold provisions that nullify regional laws, we are bending over backwards to give multinationals the right to do whatever they want, wherever they want, however they want, without any recourse against their possible crimes. And in this case, it is the responsibility of our government to extradite Anderson to India so that they may try him in their own fashion. However, its been 18 years and nothing's happened yet. As Casey Harrell from Greenpeace put it, "if a team of journalists and Greenpeace managed to track down India's most wanted man in a matter of days, how seriously have the US authorities tried to find him all these years?"

* * *

The Earth Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa just recently ended. Although it was much hyped, and yet another chance to unify all nations toward a sustainable future, the general message was pretty much the same as all recent environmental conferences: the United States sucks! Throughout the ten-day summit, the US led the cavalry in trying to water down almost every environmental goal set by the world leaders. In fact, the US showed its true commitment to the environment in a grand-sweeping statement: the absence of its president. The leaders of hundreds of different nations showed up to rally support for a healthier planet but, as shouldn't be much of a surprise for one of the most-polluting nations in the world, its oil-happy president was "unable" to attend.

As a token of good faith, the Bush administration sent its favorite puppy dog, Colin Powell, to disguise the United States as the leader in environmental salvation when its quite the opposite in reality. During his speech, Powell was interrupted numerous times by boos and jeers form the crowd. First, he criticized the government of Zimbabwe for land reforms that Powell claims will cause massive famine. He also stuck his nose up at Zambia for rejecting genetically modified corn, which he claims "Americans eat every day." 13 protesters were forcibly removed from the main hall during his speech.

Eventually, the US citizenry will have to own up to the fact that it is responsible for a grossly unjust amount of global damage, compounded by the fact that many of the largest polluters in the world are multinational companies whose headquarters are located here. Until this happens, those of us who live in the US should be ashamed of our government's constant attempts to derail any true beneficial change and do everything in our power to change our course.

* * *

I was recently passing through northern Illinois and went past a massive building for Motorola, Inc., our buddies in the wireless business. Though this was not even Motorola's headquarters, which are located about 30 miles away, I couldn't help but being shocked by its sheer size. The grounds were a sprawling mess of modern, technologically-based buildings and well-manicured grass and blacktop. I have to confess that it was impressive on a certain level.

I also recently went through the southern suburbs of Minneapolis, the infamous home of the Mall Of America, with some friends (please note I said "through"). Thankfully, the mall was not our destination. But a couple of miles east down I-494, we went past a new building: the soon-to-be-completed Best Buy headquarters. Architecturally speaking, this building is one of the more amazing artistic accomplishments that I've seen in a long time (and its not even quite finished!).

It's sad to me that some of the most beautiful, and/or impressive buildings of our times are in the hands of large corporations. The Sears Tower, The Prudential Building, The Petronas Towers; these are all some of the most famous buildings in the world. And this is not to mention the hoards of sports stadiums that now carry the names of these big companies like Coors Field, 3Com Stadium, or Miller Park. Hell, even the World Trade Center was merely a glorified office building for numerous public and private companies.

In the past, most of the world's most famous buildings were large public ordeals. They were usually built in grandiose style to either pay respect to a religious figure (or some facet of the spiritual world) or to showcase the endless capabilities of mankind. These were the museums, mausoleums, tombs, churches, bridges, etc. Many of these buildings were built using public money and the public was therefore welcome to attend and "bask in their glory."

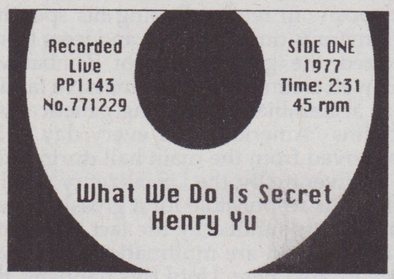
However, most modern mechanical wonders are significant in that the general public is not allowed to be a part of the building or, in some cases, will only be allowed at a cost. No one from the Average Joe/Jane Dept. can get into corporate headquarters (See: Michael Moore, *Roger & Me*) without invitation, unless said corporation provides a free tour. (If you are interested in touring

the headquarters of certain large corporations, I can get you the number of a guy who will provide information on where you can get a life!) Some buildings will charge you a fee for entering. Other buildings, like casinos and malls, only let you in because its expected that you will spend plenty of dough whilst inside. Crazier still are those aforementioned sports arenas. In the case of those, the public usually foots a large chunk of the bill for construction, but still has to pay, typically a lot, to get inside, when it's completed.

Its definitely not the largest problem in the world, but I think that it's interesting to note that society, just as it is in many other aspects of life, is experiencing a takeover of public life by private enterprise. Big businesses are sitting on a pile of well-flaunted wealth, but the public just can't afford nice things anymore.

* * *

As always, if anyone feels like dropping me a line, or a sample copy of your fantastic zine so we can carry it at the bookstore, write to me at: Nathan Berg, c/o Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.



Eating Ice Cream and Listening To Abba

Welcome to another month of words strung together randomly spilling outta the tip tapping fingers in a miasma of fill in the blanks, and that ain't just the brownies talkin'. Great movie, *24 Hour Party People,* in which the Factory Records Manchester scene gets romanticized from Joy Division to New Order to Happy Mondays to Bankruptcy Leanings, if you can get past the Tony Wilson head honcho narcissism. Mekons 25 year anniversary gig tomorrow night at Slim's. Where were you?

Leave Home

A contingent of American collector scum converged upon San Francisco in August. He, infamous of the smelly pate and occasional unabashed peddler of rare OINGO BOINGO records on eBay with his wifey stayed at the liberal-user-of-cap-letters Roehrs household of mis-filed records. His dimples glistened in the fog. The mysterious and awe-inspiring BD snuck away from 1.5 children to score a RANDYS 45 at some East Bay record store. We fed him a Big Gulp of his favorite swill, orange juice and vodka, for nostalgia purposes. However, his memory bank had erased that in favor of more discographical facts. Kim Chee, now going by the name Opie for his Opus hoarding tendencies, stayed at my place along with his ex-blank-ex girlfriend who lies over the ocean. Jeff Yih, ex-*MRR* and now dating machine, and I brought up the rear. Pedestrian activities abounded. Rifling through the dollar boxes at Amoeba Records on the Haight. Reenacting butt plugging at Alcatraz, Smelly Pate always volunteering to be the plugee. Opie maintained his normal slant-eyed demeanor, wide-eyed only as we drove through the wreckage of the Folsom Street Leather Fair on our way back to the airport. "I saw his craaack," he crowed as his g-i-r-l-f-r-e-n took pictures. "These will enhance our sex life," she exclaimed. I could swear something was going down in SF record-wise, like someone on their deathbed or somethin' but I think it was an all'n'all innocent gathering.

Those Damned Italians...

Pier from Raveup Records peppered with me some recent releases that got beat up in the mail between there and here, but they whirled around the turntable OK...

RED SQUARES hailed from Phoenix and their lone release the Time Change/Modern Roll 45 on the Nanxiety label can be found on many a punk want list. Raveup Records releases the Modern Roll LP, 12 songs of really good nervous, aggressive punk. "Modern Roll" comes from the same roots-punk axis as the first EAT 45. "Time Change" speeds along with sing along chorus and space rock guitar solos. The faux Brit accent gets hauled out for a buncha tracks like the excellent "City Girls" and "No You Can't." The LP ends with a few scorching live tracks, proving that they were no studio fluke (they played live nearly every day of the year in 1981). Great record.

The GYNECOLOGISTS embrace the adolescent obnoxio-outrageousness of their Bloomington, Indiana kin Kenne Highland's GIZMOS, and infuse Reagan and television subject matter with fast aggressive hardcore leanings to brew a wonderfully fucked stew that reminisces more of Texas bands like BUTTHOLE SURFERS or REALLY RED. Culled from their two 7" EPs and Cassette that were released in the early 80s, Raveup's Bukkake Hit Parade LP holds together like a pile of instant mashed potatoes. Even their cover of "Brandy (You're a Fine Girl)" sounds offensively great. If not my favorite Raveup release so far, it's damned close. Absolutely not a bad tune in the bunch, a loin weeper to be sure. Totally recommended, even if you can't take a joke.

From WIPERS country, aka Portland, Oregon, come the fierce driving guitar attack of the STIPHNOYDS on Raveup Records release number 27. Pounding drums courtesy of pre-WIPER Brad Naish. Their *Afraid of the Russians* 3-track 45 leads off this LP collection, and proves that they along with ICE-9 and SADO-NATION to be one of best bands from that city. The bands two tracks from the *10-29-79* compilation are also included. The remaining never before released tracks, studio and some live tracks all well are mostly good to excellent. "Buried Alive," "What Love Is," and "Bobby Bobby" are as good as any of their released tracks, "Leave Me Alone" is good; only "Disco Fag" is the only tired track. This is a really good release and worth getting.

The STERICS were a clean cut looking bunch of lads whose power pop wasn't even of the skinny tie variety. They sported more of the preppy look of the NERVES. Similarly, their sound contained none of the nervous energy of their more hyper brethren. On the Backstreet label, the power pop imprint of Raveup Records, their 6-song 7" EP doesn't hook you in but repeated listenings do worm their way into certain orifices. From Hartford Connecticut, and another release from Keith "Grave" Donaldson, the same thug who put out the excellent *Guillotined at the Hangar* comp, he was apparently the compiler/keeper of all master tapes from the '78-'84 era in that region. These tracks were recorded '79-'81. Vocals reminiscent of Craig Bell's Connecticut pop combo THE SAUCERS, the music ranges from a strummy glam post-Bowie outing on "For Lovers Only" to mostly straightforward pop'n roll, the standouts being "Fames A Fortune," the EP's lead track, and good noisy guitar on "Red Lady's Friend."

Catchy power pop a la Rick Springfield's "Jessie's Girl" can be found on lead track of the ALTER EGO 7" EP, also on Backstreet Records. This NYC based combo was one in a string of bands that included MALONEY'S TOUCH, who also saw a Backstreet release earlier this year. With feathered hair and the peroxided blonde bombshell Mamie Francis, these guys run thru the popular light genres of the time, boogie-ing their way thru the sax-filled "Leather and Lace," the new wavey "Soap Opera Junkie" punctuated with staccato keyboards, a cool cover of HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS' "Tell That Girl To Shut Up," and a coupla decent power pop tracks.

Look no further for wimp pop than the FLASHCUBES, who have an double LP Anthology on Backstreet Records. Fans of the NERVES and that ilk can rejoice. "Christi Girl," their best known 45 track, first released on 1978, sounds surprisingly thin and pale on side one, particularly when sandwiched between tracks recorded in 1993 that refine their chops to new heights. "It's You Tonight" and "She's Leaving" are so full of classic hooks they embed themselves in your head after one listen. Tracks recorded in 1979 fill most of side two, and are mostly minor mighta-been-hits on another planet. Some particularly uninspiredly inane lyrics can be found here ("I'm taking inventory/It's such a sad sad story") and some minor riffage. Side Three kicks off with the great "No Promise," originally released as the a-side of their second 45. Most of the tracks are decent pop, some with enough energy to be power pop, but mostly decently crafted stuff that probably won't appeal to the punk rockers out there. Bonus points for the insert, which painstakingly covers the long and twisted saga of the band from their 1977 humble beginnings to their recent recording sessions and is one of the better liner notes, if too much information is not a problem.

History Lesson Part III

BACKSTORY is a band or a concept or a dessert topping outta Fresno whose online presence can be found at www.geocities.com/ punksnax/BACKSTORYrootsofpunk. Their Roots of Punk CD attempts to portray the band as historians who are trying to teach y'all about punk and the roots thereof, rather than the half baked cover band that it really is (just kidding). Actually, these guys faithfully and earnestly plod through renditions of classic punk songs such as the DEAD BOYS' "Sonic Reducer," proto-punk or "Chinese Rocks," back to the 50s garage of the SONICS and LINK WRAY from the 60s. From their photo, these look like some old guys trying to rock out, but what the fuck, I'm 40 with a low testosterone level and I don't want to get my ass kicked. These guys are awesome. Drink lots of beer.

eBayWatch

Recent hyperrarrities include CHOSEN FEW, STIMULATORS' M.A.C.H.I.N.E, CHAIN GANG Deuce Pack. GAME THEORY'S Blaze of Glory LP in its original white trash bag recently went for a reasonable sum.

The Usual Hoo Ha

All submissions get mentioned. Just be prepared for a good natured slag. Henry 4309 23rd St, San Francisco, CA 94114. Still working on an interview with Gulcher honcho Bob Richert, and maybe CD Presents honcho Dave Ferguson if he'll let me...

CrimethInc.
Workers' Collective Bullet-in

A True Story

We dropped out of school, got divorced, broke with our families and ourselves and everything we'd known. We quit our jobs, violated our leases, threw all our furniture out on the sidewalk, and hit the road. We sat on the swings of children's playgrounds until our toes were frostbitten, admiring the moonlight on the dewy grass, writing poetry on the wind for each other.

We went to bed early and lay awake until well past dawn recounting all the awful things we'd done to others and they to us and laughing, blessing and absolving each other and this crazy cosmos. We stole into museums showing reruns of old Guy Debord films to write FIGHT FOUL and FASTER, MY FRIEND, THE OLD WORLD IS BEHIND YOU on the backs of theater seats. The scent of gasoline still fresh on our hands, we watched the new sun rise, and spoke in hushed voices about what we should do next, thrilling in the budding consciousness of our own limitless power.

We used stolen calling card numbers to talk our teenage lovers through phone sex from telephones in the lobbies of police stations.

We broke into the private pools and saunas of the rich to enjoy them as their owners never had.

We escaped the cell blocks of our ghetto flats and basement rooms to gobble the food and sleep on the silken sheets of the wealthy, feeling like victorious, avenging conquerors—even when it was the houses of our parents.

We slipped into the offices where our browbeaten friends shuffled papers for petty despots, to draft anti-imperialist manifestos on their computers, or just sleep under their desks. They were shocked that morning they finally walked in on us, half-naked, brushing our teeth at the water cooler.

We lived through harrowing, exhilarating moments when we did things we had always thought impossible, spitting in the face of all our apprehensions to kiss unapproachable beauties, drop banners from the tops of national monuments, drop out of colleges...and then gritted our teeth, expecting the world to end—but it didn't!

We stood or knelt in emptying concert halls, on rooftops under lightning storms, on the dead grass of graveyards, and swore with tears in our eyes never to go back again.

We sat at desks in high school detention rooms, against the worn brick of Greyhound bus stations, on disposable synthetic sheets in the emergency treatment wards of unsympathetic hospitals, on the hard benches of penitentiary dining halls, and swore the same thing through clenched teeth, but with no less tenderness.

We communicated with each other through initials carved into boarding school desks, designs spray-painted through stencils onto alley walls, holes kicked in corporate windows televised on the five o'clock news, letters posted with counterfeit stamps or carried across oceans in friends' packs, secret instructions coded into anonymous emails, clandestine meetings in coffee shops, love poetry carved into the planks of prison bunks.

We sheltered illegal immigrants, political refugees, fugitives from justice, adolescent runaways in our modest homes and beds, as they too sheltered us. We improvised recipes to bake each other cookies, cakes, breakfasts in bed, weekly free meals in the park, great feasts celebrating our courage and kinship so we might taste their sweetness on our very tongues.

We entrusted each other with our hearts and appetites, together composing symphonies of caresses and pleasure, making love a verb in a language of exaltation.

We wreaked havoc upon their gender norms and ethnic stereotypes and cultural expectations, showing with our bodies and our relationships and our desires just how arbitrary their laws of nature were.

We wrote our own music and performed it for each other, so when we hummed to ourselves we could celebrate our companions' creativity rather than repeat the radio's dull drone. In borrowed attic rooms, we tended ailing foreign lovers and struggled to write the lines that could ignite the fires dormant in the multitudes around us. In the last moment before dawn, flashlights tight in our shaking hands, we dismantled power boxes on the houses of fascists who were to host rallies the following day.

We fought those fascists tooth, nail, and knife in the streets, when no one else would even confront them in print.

We planted gardens in the abandoned lots of ghettos, hitch-hiked across continents in record time, tossed pies in the faces of kings and bankers.

We played saxophones together in the darkness of echoing caves in West Virginia. In Paris, armed with cobblestones and parasols, we held the gendarmes at bay for nights on end, until we could almost taste the new world coming through the tear gas.

We fought our way through their lines to the opera house and took it over, and held discussions there twenty four hours a day as to what that world could be.

In Chicago, we created an underground network to provide illegal abortions in safe conditions and a supportive atmosphere, when the religious fanatics would have preferred us to die in shame and tears down dark alleys.

In New York we held hands and massaged each other's shoulders as our enemies closed in to arrest us.

In Quebec we tore up the highway and pounded out primordial rhythms on the traffic signs with the fragments, and the sound was vaster and more beautiful than any song ever played in a concert hall.

In Santiago, we robbed banks to fund newspapers of transgressive poetry.

In Siberia, we plotted impossible escapes and carried them out, circumnavigating the globe with forged papers and borrowed money to return to the arms of our friends.

In Montevideo, in the squatted township, we built huts from plywood and plastic sheeting, pirated electricity from nearby power lines, and conferred with our neighbors as to how we could contribute to our new community.

In San Diego, when they jailed us for speaking our minds, we invited our friends and filled their prisons until they had to change their policy.

In Oregon, we climbed trees, and lived in them for months to protect the forests we had hiked and camped in as children.

In Mexico, when we met hopping freight trains, we traded stories about working with the Zapatistas in Chiapas, about floods witnessed from boxcars passing through Texas, about our grandparents who fought in the Mexican revolution.

We fought in that revolution, and the Spanish civil war, and the French resistance, and even the Russian revolution—though not for the Bolsheviks or the Czar. Sleepless and weather-beaten, we crossed the Ukraine on horseback to deliver news of the conflicts that offered us another chance to fight for our freedom. Tense but untrembling, we smuggled posters, books, firearms,

fugitives, ourselves across borders from Canada to Pakistan.

We lied with clean consciences to homicide detectives in Reno, to military police in Santos, to angry grandparents in Oslo.

We told the truth to each other, even truths no one had ever dared tell before.

When we couldn't overthrow governments, we raised new generations who would taste the sweet adrenaline of barricades and wheatpaste, who would carry on our quixotic quest when we fell or fled before the ruthless onslaught of the servile and craven.

When we could overthrow governments, we did. We stood, one after the other, decade after decade, century after century, behind the witness stand, and shouted so the deafest self-satisfied upright citizen at the back of the courtroom could hear it: "...and if I could do it all over again, I would!" As the sun rose after winter parties in unheated squats, we gathered up great sacks of broken glass and washed stacks of dishes in freezing water, while our critics, sequestered in penthouses with maid service, demanded to know who would take out the garbage in our so-called utopia.

When the good intentions of liberals and reformists broke down in bureaucracy, we collected food from the trash to feed the hungry, broke into condemned buildings and transformed them into palaces fit for pauper kings and bandit queens, held the sick and dying tight in our loving arms.

We fell in love in the wreckage, shouted out songs in the uproar, danced joyfully in the heaviest shackles they could forge; we smuggled our stories through the gauntlets of silence, starvation, and subjugation, to bring them back to life again and again as bombs and beating hearts; we built castles in the sky from the ruins of hell on earth.

One of us even assassinated the President of the United States.

Accepting no constraints from without, we countenanced none within ourselves, either, and found that the world opened before us like the petals of a rose.

I'm speaking, of course, of anarchists—and when people ask me about my politics, I tell them: the best reason to be a revolutionary is that it is simply a better way to live. Their laws guarantee us the right to remain silent, the right to a public trial by a jury of our peers (though my peers wouldn't put me on trial—would yours?) what about the right to live life like we won't get another chance, to have reasons to stay up all night in urgent conversation, to look back on every day without regret or bitterness? Such rights we can only claim for ourselves—and shouldn't these be our central concerns, not the minutiae of protocol and survival? For those of us born into a captivity gilded by the blood and sweat of less fortunate captives, the challenge of leading a life worth living, of stories worth telling is a lifelong project, and a formidable one; but all it takes, at any moment, to meet this challenge is to contest that captivity. When we fight, we're fighting for our lives.

[This is a draft from yet another free paper we have coming out soon. For a copy, or any other reason, write us—CrimethInc. Havoc Wreakers, PO Box 1963, Olympia, WA 98507, USA—or try www.crimethinc.com]

Duty's Call

You fucks are in luck! TKO Records has re-released the first two ANTiSEEN EPs in a deluxe gatefold package. This reissue is blessed by Jeff Clayton and Joe Young and finally you young punks will be able to have this vinyl in your house for a reasonable price! The first seven inch by ANTiSEEN is called *The Drastic EP* and this fucker is packed with nasty rock n' roll from Charlotte, North Carolina. On side one of this 1985 Death Train Music release-you get to hear a fledging wall of guitar noise by Joe Young, while a clean shaven Jeff Clayton hollers all the way through "Queen City Stomp," "She's Part of the Scene," and "Rumors," before ANTiSEEN drops a fusillade on you with "Psycho Path." This is blood curdling brutal scum punk! Side two carries the mayhem a step further with "Absent Minded," warming up you varmints. Next the bleak sentiments of "Nothing's Cool" come oozing out of your speakers. This is slow, dangerous rock that threatens to destroy the paltry existence you call a life. The grand finale on *The Drastic EP* is "Destructo Rock"—The song that became the measuring stick that all other Confederacy of Scum bands would be judged by for the next twenty years.

The other half of this excellent scum-pack is ANTiSEEN's second seven inch, *EP Royalty*, from 1986. The thunderous mountain of venom that is Jeff Clayton is beginning to erupt non-stop. The title song comes first, and "N.C. Royalty" contains some stinging lyrics about Carolina Society. Read these words: "Puttin' their noses where they don't belong/Cry and scream till they get what they want/The self righteous hypocrites!/I can't see it, cause they don't like it/Blast the airwaves with anterior motives/The rich stinking pigz/The N.C. Royalty/Look at what they're doing to you and me/The NC Royalty are ruining my life/ They got clever answers too every question/Honestly believing they're closer to heaven by putting us thru hell/Their constitution means nothing to them/They got the cash to change the meaning/Fucking lying whores!/They make everyone bend to their moral beliefs/I don't need the swine dictating to me right here in the bible belt/They call themselves caring Christians/They should recheck that definition/ the Power Hungry Slime!"

Next up you get a short one called "If I Had a Million Bucks" and then Clayton and Young eviscerate you with "White Trash Bitch." You've never heard such brutal words as you get here! Flip this EP over and you jump from the frying pan into the fire with "Ruby Ruby Get Back to the Hills," based on the films *The Hills Have Eyes* I and II by Mr. Wes Craven. Clayton makes his feelings perfectly clear —listen to "Constant Nagging." This is a great song!! The Boys from Brutalsville kick your butt with "Cop Out" (Bye, Bye), and then for a bonus track unleash a passionate version of "She's Part of the Scene" which you will remember from the *Drastic* EP. Fucking great!

The third EP available on TKO right now is the *Blood of Freaks* EP originally available in 1988 on Ajax Records, from Chicago. This fucker attacks your face from the get-go with "Up All Night" —killer. The second rough-ass tune is "Hippie-punk" and this fucker is spittin' teeth! Amazing! Turn this EP over and you have a crowd-pleasing favorite: "I Wish I Had Killed You When I Had the Chance." Not to be outdone by that tune Clayton/Young finish you off with "I Don't Need You" —yeah! Look for the reissue of the ANTiSEEN "Eat more Possum" LP soon, as well as a COCKNOOSE LP. Write to TKO Records, 3126 W. Cary St., #303, Richmond, Virginia, 23221.

LRF from Japan has a brand spanking new 28 track 2xCD compilation out on Real Deal Records. This excellent collection is called *Yet More —The Roughs and the Smooths*. These songs comprise LRF's output from 1989 to 1998. The material is taken from: "Yes We Are The Finalists" single 1997; *It's A Kick To Be Alive* compilation 1997; *6 Days Rage* EP 1996; *Total Insubordination* compilation 1996; *Trueforce Official Rules* compilation 1995; *Super Yobs Vol. 2* compilation 1995; *Burnt Out* compilation 1994; and two demo tapes from 1993 and 1989 respectively. Some of the song titles give you an indication of the subject matter for these jangly guitar-laden skin head melodies: "Yes We Are The Finalists;" "School Killer Juvenile Thug;" "Young Bloods;" "Students Students;" "Bullshitters & Asskickers;" "The Lost Decade;" "The Ship Goes Down Bow First;" "Union Give Strength;" "Damn Poseur;" "Alienated;" "Deadend Factory Job;" "You're Fired;" "Rebels For a Weekend;" "The Lost Decade original;" "3 More Years;" "We All Stand Clear;" "Elton John Foundation;" "Brawny Shaped Shit;" "Not Union Goddamn Club;" "We Outstare You;" "I'm Also a Dreamer;" "Nowadays;" "Cityscape;" "LRF is Watching You;" "On the Alps Terraces;" "Yes, We Are the Finalists;" "View of Freedom;" and "The Ship Went Down Bow First." This is excellent street music with favorable comparisons to SIDEBURNS, BAD VULTURES, and CRIKEY CREW. The vocals and guitars have a toughness to them without forsaking the melodic hooks that good Oi! music is famous for.

Some of the tracks are quite infectious and you will find

yourself singing the tunes hours later. Influences on this band includeTHE CLASH, SHAM 69, THE BUSINESS, LAST RESORT, ANGELIC UPSTARTS and the UK SUBS. This is very good!

Outlaws Records presents a kick-ass compilation for you punk rockers. This *Specialty Troop* CD features twenty-three tracks performed by punk and hardcore bands from Osaka, Japan. CHARACTER leads off followed by a strong EXPLOSION SACK song called "Only So Much." Later in the CD, EXPLOSION SACK kills you with another tune, "86." Next you get CHINMOKU BAKUGEKIKI rocking their hardcore song, "All the Way." Skip THE DOLORES EXPERIMENT crap and get right to HISATAKA and their brute hardcore song, "Dirty Dog." DEGENERATE rages with their grinding punk tunes, "Whip It To Me" and "Destreation" (EP). Song seven is by INDEX and this is pretty good punk rock! INDEX return on track 16 with "Dream in the Actuality" —rocking shit! PLASTIC NINE from Tokyo bring female fronted punk to the plate —good stuff! AUTOMATIC ORANGE is funk/punk. FUZZTONE from Kobe do melodic 60s influenced rock n' roll for you. BLACKMAN has some shouted metal riffs for you in "Go Mad." The women of RED BACTERIA VACUUM from Tokyo kick your punk butt with "Hopping Kid." CHARACTER reprised their punk introduction with "Get Tough." The final chapter in this quality CD is the fabulous DOROCHYS and their tune "Never Give Up." Write to Outlaws Records, 1-2-4 Komagawa Higasisumiyosh-Ku Osaka City, Japan 546-0043, Mitsuhiro, Ikeda (Kiwpie).

Japan's Bronze Fist and Shot and Shout Records have a new CLASH DOGS / ANGER FLARES split mini-CD for you punks and skins. The CD is called *Sense of Unity*. CLASH DOGS lead off the festivities with "Aggressive Life" about youthful boredom and frustration. Next you get "Wait and See." These are sung in English with a melodic punk foundation. Very good!

Next up you have ANGER FLARES with two strong skinhead anthems: "Fight One's Way" and "For the Truth." This music features the deep and gruff singing style that works so well in skinhead music. The guitars and drums compliment the rock hard vocals to make for a potent mix. Write to Shot & Shout Records at Bronze Fist Records c/o Hideki Takasaki, 5-2-104-203, Higash-Toyonaka, Toyonaka City, Osaka, Japan 560-0003; www.hz.dion.ne.jp/~sszine.

Interference Records has a first rate compilation ready for you snotty punk rockers and boot boys. The *Pride, Respect and Sincerity* CD showcases twenty bands from the USA and Japan. SQUIGGY from Newton, New Jersey, fires the first salvo with "Drink One for Armen" —a respectful anthem for the leader of Headache Records. STRONG BLOSSOM from Japan plays song number two. Good! TOMMY AND THE TERRORS from Newton, Massachusetts come out swinging on "Outbound" —great! CRANKED (Japan) plays "Under the Sun." THE BOILS from Westchester, Pennsylvania, USA do "Another Tragic Story" —this is really good punk rock for you cretins! DEAD FOUR 13 (Japan) is the next band and these guys do "Sweet Honey Rock and Roll." SLANG —one of Japan's heaviest punk bands drop the bomb on you with "Confidence." THE OISTERS (USA) are up to bat next with "King of Rudeness." This Austin, Texas Oi! band creates a melodic streetpunk groove for you young pups. After the OISTERS, you get URAN 1945 from Japan, followed shortly by the well-known Mark Linskey and his HUDSON FALCONS from Maywood, New Jersey, USA, doing "Scab" about union priorities —a honest wage for a honest day's work. Very good! After the HUDSON FALCONS, you will hear ONE FOR ALL, from Japan, doing "Brightest Stars." Track twelve is a treat from one of California's many streetpunk contenders, THE FORGOTTEN play "Ask No Questions" and they play it well! TERMINAL from Japan, follows with "The Right To Starve." Atlanta, Georgia's great punk/skinhead outfit, TERMINUS CITY comes slinging guitars with Frank growling out the great lyrics on one of their most loved songs, "Work for a Living." Yes!!! TABLOID PLAY (Japan) are your next selection, after which you hear, THE VIRUS, the popular Chaos-punk, spiky haired outfit from Easton, Pennsylvania, USA crank up the volume with "Looks Like Trouble" —very good! THE PLOT, from Japan, set the stage for THE KRAYS —a Union, New Jersey, USA punk band and SIXER. The three bonus tracks on the CD are all Japanese. TABLOID PLAY, CRANKED, and URAN 1945 finish off this respectable compilation. Contact Interference Records at www.interference-records.com.

THE SONS OF LIBERTY are back with a vengeance! Philadelphia's tough Oi! men—Lon, Bob and Steve are putting out a full length CD called *Border Brawl*. This shit is hard as nails! THE SONS OF LIBERTY roll through their tough anthem and proceed to kick a lot of skinhead butt. THE SONS OF LIBERTY concentrate on the American Civil War on several songs on this CD—as they did on their first record. The songs "We Shall Meet Again" and "Duty's Call" appeared on THE SONS OF LIBERTY debut EP earlier this year. The song "Duty's Call," in particular, is one strong as fuck song! "Roll Call," Antietam" and "Minute Men" are songs you will want to listen to. There's also a great cover of "You're So Dumb" on this disc. "Palmetto" has some interesting lyrics about life in the Carolinas —great song! The *Border Brawl* CD is good, rough and tumble skinhead music for you beer drinking' louts. We will keep you posted as to it's release date.

Those musical skinheads from Italy/Switzerland, THE DEVILSKINS, are back with a strong seven inch on Blind Beggar Records from Germany. Side "A" contains the title track, "Liberta" and "Fuori del Branco." This is first quality skinhead music in the style of the VOICE OF BELLEVUE from France or THE TEMPLARS from the United States. Side "B" of this bootboy gem is the song, "No Comment" (FUN) which has a harmonica and saxophone back beat that makes for an infectious tune with an almost ska-like groove. This is quite pleasant! Good cover layout by Mike Longshot from Vancouver. For your copy. Write Blind Beggar "Working Class" Record Label at Bogen Str. 25, D-66957 Eppenbrun, Germany; www.oirecords.com.

DISCIPLINE from the Netherlands, have a rocking hot-as-shit four song mini-CD for you fucks on I-Scream Records. These rowdy streetpunks come thrashing out of the cage with two originals. The first tune, "Everywhere We Go," has a really good REDUCERS SF. feel to it. The second song, "Dirty World," has a nice AL BARR / BRUISERS ring. Fuck yes! Song number three is a MISFITS cover —how could you go wrong with a hard bit cover of "Astro Zombies"? Song four is a treat —a cover of one of ROSE TATTOO's best songs, "One of the Boys." Yeah! This kicks ass! Contact I-Scream Records at www.iscream-records.com

Oi! Strike Records from Rome, Italy has a fine CD compilation prepared for you skins and punks. This ten band extravaganza begins with the VANILLA MUFFINS and two of their Sugar Oi! tunes. Next up you have DUAP with two songs from their split 7" with COLONA INFAME, "Odio" and "La Vendetta." Bands three and four are a special treat for you skinheads: the TEMPLARS play "Last Time" (a ROLLING STONE's cover) and THE DEVILSKINS do "Simone da Locarno" and "La Tua Rivolta." Fucking great!

The next band in the rotation is BILLY BOY E LA SUA BANDA with seven songs from their OI! Strike repertoire. The sixth band featured is RAZZAPPARTE playing four songs with good sing-a-long streetpunk/Oi! flavor. Band number seven on this sonic treat is BANDA DEL RIONE doing two really good gruff Oi! numbers: "Per le Strada Della Tua Citta" and "Toro." Rough and tough and most entertaining!

The next musical selection is CERVELLI STANKI with two songs: "Street Rock n' Roll" and "1984." Following CERVELLI STANKI you have RABBIA rocking you with "Divise Rosse e Bin" and "Guarda Avanti." This has that deep growling vocals that always please! Tracks twenty six and twenty seven are provided ALLERGIA to round out a high spirited Oi!/streetpunk sampler. Write to: Oi!/Strike Records at: vis Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, Italy; soarecords@libero.it; www.soarecords.it.

Mike Thug's Longshot Records has some new product for you punks! The EXCESSIVES full length CD contains ten original songs of fast punk with loud gruff vocals and chugging guitar playing. The EXCESSIVES roar through "Shitheal," "Cosmonaut" and "Half-Cut" before playing a nice cover of the SIMPLETONES song, "I Like Drugs." "Knifefight on the Beach" keeps the momentum perking along. "Side Tracks" energy flags a little, but "Astronaut Food" picks up the pace again. "Man Do I Ever H8 U" thrashes your ass off! "302" rocks along at a good clip. "Enamorado" gets cranked up pretty good after the intro finishes. "Repeat Offender" provides the closing strains of good

rock n' roll. This is a damn decent release by Mike Longshot, formerly of the SUBWAY THUGS, currently of EMERGENCY.
You heard mention of EMERGENCY two months ago —now they have a proper three song demo out. The CD-R starts out with "Media Control," an up-beat punk number with Fergus, (formerly of THE STRIKE from the UK circa 1982), singing in a fine Colin McFaull (COCK SPARRER) fashion.

The second demo EMERGENCY tune is "This Generation" and once again you get polished punk n' roll for you melodic rockers. Song three is "Johnny's Coming Home" and the hooks are all in place. There are spunky guitar parts and perfectly timed choruses. This high-spirited, well crafted punk rock will interest fans of THE CRACK. Write to Longshot Records, for information on THE EXCESSIVES, c/o Scratch Records, 726 Richards St., Vancouver, BC V6B3A4, Canada; www.longshotmusic.com. Contact EMERGENCY at emergencyemergency@hotmail.com.

Beer City Records has re-released the legendary VERBAL ABUSE LP, *Just an American Band* on CD backed with *Live in '84*, The infamous early line-up of Nicki Sicki (vocals), Joie (guitar), Brett Dodwell (bass), and Greg James (drums) careen through thirteen great songs: "Power Play;" "Leeches;" "I Hate You;" "Social Insect;" "Boredom;" "Bud;" "Disintegration;" "Unity;" "Free Money;" "I Don't Need It;" "Verbal Abuse;" and "American Band." This band was a one-of-a-kind live punk assault. Witness the *Live in '84* mayhem —13 good songs and decent live sound. The music has held up well over the years. Nicki Sicki is alive and well and back on the street. Could it be reunion time? Order the CD from, Beer City, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226; www.beercity.com.

We got some more good hardcore punk bootlegs in the mail. The INSULTS from Muskegon, Michigan lay down ten Reagan era h/c songs from January 1985 in the DEAD KENNEDY mold. The songs cover a myriad of subjects from dumb jocks in high school ("You're a Dick") to the episode where Michael Jackson caught his hair on fire ("Michael's On Fire"). Good hardcore spoken here!

From Montreal, Canada in the early eighties you had hardcore maestros GENETIC CONTROL churning out hits like, "Brave New World," "Suburban Life," "Nineteen Eighty-Four," and "Urban Cowboy." These punks were able to play fast punk rock with social commentary and then slow things down for a melodic number with biting lyrics ("Urban Cowboy"). Good shit! Get this bootleg and save $120!

The third selection is a freakin' hardcore masterpiece! NEON CHRIST from Atlanta, Georgia recorded this brilliant punk platter in Avondale, Georgia, March thirty first, 1984. These punks rip through "Parental Suppression," "Draft Song," "Winding," "Bad Influence" and their incredible anthem, "Neon Christ." The second side rips into your skull with "We Mean Business," "Yoof," "It's Mine" and "Doom." This shit is so punk!

Someone with excellent taste in records has reissued even more classic mid-80s hardcore punk records! This individual has altered the pictures on the sleeves, but the sound is good. The best of the crop is THE STATE EP called *No Illusions*. This band of Michigan hardcore geniuses absolutely scorches the planet! Every song on this EP shreds! The guys pummel through "No Illusions," "Attention," "New Right," "Subvert," "Police State," and "Hard Line." These punks could write a songs! Read the lyrics to hard line: "I push my mind beyond the edge/ My face turned blue and green and red/ I clenched my fist and held my breath/ Closed my eyes and grit my teeth/ Forced my thought into a line/ Pain did not deter my mind/ I drove my question to it's final stage/ No alcohol confused my gaze/ I glued it to my spine/ Truth is clear within my mind/ I took it in my hands/ In my head I understand/ I bound it to my will/ Even though it made me ill/ Now I seize the facts/ Now I know that I must act/ I cast my sight along a track/ Holding all distractions back/ Shut the noise out held my ears/ Faced the facts and had no fear/ Gazed into a bottomless pit/ Where I saw gold and I saw shit/ Conquered my stupidity/ Principles must govern me/ I glued it to my spine/ Truth is clear within my mind/ I took it in my hands/ In my head I understand/ I bound it to my will/ Even though it made me ill/ And even though I ache/ It seems to me that I must take a hard line/ hard line/ hard line."

We are not finished with the hardcore reissues yet!! You get some brutal New Jersey hardcore from THE WORST with the new 7" version of an LP that originally appeared on Mutha Records in 1983. This is fast and furious punk with politically incorrect lyrics typical of Garden State punk of that era —read on: "Love, hate, pain, war/ I don't want to see your love/ Let me see your eyes/ Wanna see your face/ Let me see your legs/ Wanna feel your legs/ Wanna see your eyes/ Wanna see your face/ What do ya wanna do/ Let me feel your thighs/ Feeling up your thighs/ Feeling up your legs/ What do you think of me/ What are you gonna do?" Good stuff! Now read "Going to NY": "Going to New York/ With a knife and fork/ Got nothing to eat/ Just got to retreat/ Eat it out/ Spit it out/ See a little chick/ Itching for my prick/ Won't let me fuck her/ I might as well suck her." This shit has blistering guitar work and shouted vocals —very good! The Mutha label was consistently good in the eighties with stellar hardcore and punk bands like CHILD ABUSE and CHRONIC SICK. The boot is no slouch either! Fuck Yes!!

These wise old bootleggers have reproduced the legendary KORO 7" EP (again) this is entitled *700 Club*, and as most of you hardcore enthusiasts know, this is the holy grail for rare h/c records. These Tennessee punks blast through "700 Club," "Government," "Selfless Johnny," "It's OK," "Nauseous," "Acid Casualty" and "Blap." This is positively earth shattering hardcore played at blinding speed with superior vocals and damn near perfect timing on every song!! The guitar leads are searing and appear in just the right places! Brilliant! The lyrics to "Dear Sirs" could not be more apprapo: "I don't car about your nationality/ Give a shit about your hospitality/ Ronni and his totality/ Fuck your cap gun mentalities/ Keep your back door strategies/ Mental subzero capacity/ Lucrative poseur your not for me/ Show my own integrity/ Dear Sirs why fight/ Dear Sirs it's not right/ TV soldiers nothing left to learn/ High technology no time to burn/ World of flames Ronnies real concern/ Washington Tea Party time to burn/ Why not write your own amendments/ If you love to live die for it?/No way Ronnie I won't eat shit/ Dear Sirs!"

We were treated to another bloody mess at the BP PSYCHOS Compound in Oakland, California, USA recently!! The reigning West Coast Kings of the Confederacy of Scum, HAMMERLOCK, brought their wild west stage show to the drunken brawlers at the BP PSYCHOS party!! A fine time was had by all. We hope to get a new CD from HAMMERLOCK in the not-so-distant future- we'll let you know when we hear some good news.

Josh Upstart has a good zine ready for you. It's called *Razor Blades and Angry Faces* and this new zine covers some good punk and Oi! bands. You get interviews with ONFILE, DEADLINE, SKEPTIX, and THE PARTISANS. Gary Bushell, the legendary Oi! columnist, makes a contribution. You also get some reviews of good records, for example: BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS *American Bastard* CD; ANTIDOTE *Go Pogo* CD; THE FILAMENTS *Skulls and Trombones* CD; SKINT *Live and Kicking in Dublin* CD; VIRUS *Nowhere to Hide* LP; A GLOBAL THREAT *Here We Are* LP; GROUPSKULL *Triste Realite* CD; LUTECE BORGIA *Dans la Boue* 7;" and lots more! Write to Razorblades and Angry Faces, 19a Church Street, Wotton Underedge, Gloucestershire, GL12 7HB, England.

Until next month....

See you fucks at the bar.

I have been thinking about water a lot lately. This is largely due to the fact that it has not rained here in Virginia for most of the summer. And it's also been one of the hottest summers I can remember. Combine 100 degrees every day with no rain for months on end and you end up with some pretty dire circumstances. We are in a three-year drought and it seems to be at its worst right now. This year alone I think that we are at a 22" lack of rain for what is considered normal. Essentially that means that even if it started raining ten times more than normal now there is no way that

we can make up for that deficit. We have been put on mandatory water restrictions. And supposedly there is actually an even stricter "no-watering-at-all-ban" put into effect statewide.

Now I'm not usually one who loves water. I don't usually like the rain. I don't like to be in oceans or pools or to go swimming. I don't even really like showers. I just don't like to be wet. However, rain is something that we need. The earth and the plants need quite a bit of rain, and without it, they are suffering beyond words. Consequently I have become obsessed not only with rain, but with water in general. I find myself very aware of the amount of water that I need and use. I drink a lot of water. I water the plants almost daily. I run the sprinkler on the garden. I run the wash water on the prints in the darkroom. We use a lot of water at the photo lab I work in. The water situation feels desperate and so I have become obsessed.

I'm convinced that before we even really know it, we are going to be in the middle of an incredible water shortage. Many places across the globe already are. Especially if we're talking about clean, safe drinkable water. Virginia is certainly not the only place that is suffering from a severe drought. There are drought conditions across this country, and in some cases that is the cause of these endless forest fires. We often ask if this is a result of global warming? Or is this just the natural order of the environment? Meaning, are we seeing the results of humans on the earth, or would these shifts happen anyway? Well I always kinda think it's a bit of both, as most situations are a result of multiple factors or a little bit of everything.

Any way we look at it, these days there is a lack of necessary water. They say that water will become as valuable in the near future as oil has been in our recent past. And I'm not in the least bit surprised. The bottom line is that we as human beings need water to survive. The earth needs water to survive. And as the resources for that necessary water become contaminated and scarce, it is the corporations that come along with interest in trying to control the availability of water. To privatize water. To regulate it. To own it. to consequently make a profit from it. It can be debated whether water is a human right or a privilege. And if the corporations have their way, of course it will be a privilege that must to bought at the highest price. Which of course means that water will not only become scarcer and more valuable, but also, ultimately quite expensive. But there is much more than just a dollar price that needs to be considered.

Who can imagine not having water? Those of us living in the United States probably cannot. Anyone who has lived anywhere else in the world, especially in "developing countries," will likely have a different perspective. There is some really ugly business surrounding the privatization and the ownership of water in the world right now. There are some huge issues being debated, and new regulations and laws being talked about and enacted. One of the scariest has to do with the commodification of water. In other words, the import and export of water as a sellable good. For example, under NAFTA, water is considered both an investment and a good. If Canada exports water to the US, but then finds they are at a point where the resources have been exhausted and they can no longer supply the water, they are still under obligation under NAFTA to continue to meet the demands, regardless of the impact on the environment or other factors. If they refuse, then it becomes a legal issue for lawyers to settle. It's really pretty horrifying the more you learn about this business of water. Just think about how the demands for bottled water have gone up and continue to increase. Just where does all this sparkling, crisp, clean, mountain spring water come from? And will it continue to flow from those pristine mountains forever just because some bottling company wants to export it? No, of course not.

It is really important to try to understand the decisions that are being made about our water supply because somewhere down the road this is going to affect all of us. Right now we might be lucky enough to turn on the tap and let it run endlessly without any notable consequences. That may not always be the case. Actually it would be a really great exercise (call it an experiment) to turn off your water for a time. Really measure the amount of water that you use, alongside of what you waste. If you have to carry the water that you use (as in haul it from a spring)—you will suddenly become that much more aware of how precious water is and you will be much more creative with your use. It is important to do whatever we can not only to learn to conserve water in our daily lives now—but also to continue to follow these debates within the government and corporate sphere because we do not want to see the availability of water sold off to the highest bidder. We need to ensure that healthy and clean and free-flowing water continues to be made available to everyone as a fundamental human right.

There is a lot of information available about these topics and I encourage everyone to familiarize themselves with the issues at hand. In particular I recommend an excellent article on the privatization and fight for water called "Who Owns Water?" in the September 2/9, 2002 issue of *The Nation*. This article lays out the details of the situation and the possibilities for the future a lot better than I can here in this column. Another resource for a more in-depth look at the future of our water supply is in Vandana Shiva's book *Water Wars*. Keep your eyes and ears open to the dialogs and resources out there. And in the meantime, think about water—obsess about water. Be conscientious and thoughtful and use water and other resources wisely. When you brush your teeth or wash dishes, don't leave the tap running. If you see a running or dripping sink—turn it off. If you have water left over in a drinking cup, use it to water a plant rather than just dumping it down the drain. Be thoughtful and creative. It's the little things that count. And remember to dance when it rains.

—Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-6632

At the bottom of a broken bed with several kissing men and women on top of me, trapping me in a pseudo-orgy, it suddenly occurs to me just what's going on and why I need to live in this town.

When alcohol-fueled fun awakens that starved, unexcited boy deep inside of you, it's hard to resist the sirens' call. My feet hurt and my guilt rises from doing dirty things with friends' girlfriends on the dancefloor, and tomorrow I'm going to feel like I've been hit by a car, but for now I'm in heaven. People I only met within a matter of hours are groping and biting me, and I'm trapped but happy, only able to laugh at the absurdity of it. Jersey never knew how to have fun like this.

Soon I embark on a two-month journey of the soul, in a van with nine other people traveling across this country of ours, forcing loud and important music into the ears of youth. Every extreme high and low existed there, and I came back with the realization that I just don't feel comfortable among the backwards-thinking culture of working for something you don't believe in and stand behind. I've tired of the old white men and their ideals in the bodies of my peers, and a tripped out experience I had in Florida in spring may have unlocked the (justly) paranoid beast that I've felt for years.

Talking to a bearded friend who spent his youth being force-fed "the truth" in the Catholic-system, he helped opened my eyes wider while discussing the recently publicized problem of molestation in the church. Having gone through the public school system myself I never knew that it was a fairly common, known about and hushed about thing in the air… and that's the same sort of loyal secrecy of a most-foul sickness that was found in the air among the days of Hitler.

I'd like to think that punk rockers, hardcore kids and the metalheads among us all are generally a more forward-thinking, open minded group of people. We've converged and found each other in this alternative subculture because we know something is wrong in the mainstream world, whether it's the mainstream music world or just our current society and way of living in general. And I know that we've got our problems with gossip and fashion and shit talking/backstabbing… all of those cliché things that it's easy to write about in aggressive-sounding songs, but all in all I feel that our subculture is something a little more special than we tend to see, and that most of us take it for granted. I hope that the majority of the people who have been following this music, this scene, these independently-published magazines for a few years now, or even less time, still

hold onto that notion that things are wrong in the world we live in today... but how many of us really think about changing things for the better?

While a lot of us take the easy way out and just focus on the colored vinyl, the cool band shirts and the sick production on that new metalcore CD, I know there's still the ones out there who want to change things in this country, or in this world as a whole. I recently found myself in an intense conversation with my friend's father, who's been with the CIA for something like 30 years now. A little wine in him and a little more in me got us to talking about various fucked-up environmental and governmental issues that are currently surrounding us, but that the majority of this country is quick to turn a blind eye to. And it really scared me when he helped me realize that not long from now, his generation won't be in charge anymore, and that our peers and probably enemies are the ones who will be making the decisions as to what happens with our ever-growing problems and ever-depleting natural resources.

Just think about the snobbier kids you went to high school with (or are currently going with), the ones who think they're god's gift to the world. The ones who suck up to the teachers just for a seemingly small-scale devious attempt to get what they want (good grades) by means of bribery (in this case, charm). But these are the years when social skills and mannerisms go from development to a concrete hold, and if those snobby fucks continue on their path of self-gratification to spite or exploit those around them, we're likely to see their perfectly shaped and man-made-manufactured-manicured faces all over the glowing boxes when election time comes around years from now. Do you want to see them in power? I certainly don't.

And this is where I propose that us punks, metalheads, and hardcore kids all come together, state-by-state and help get some of our peers into office. This is something we can do, it just takes a little organization and wide-spread cooperation. Don't tell me it's too far-fetched, because I know that a change has to come and who the hell else is going to do it? The hippies didn't have the organization or really even the means in the 60s. Their alternative subculture was big, but not nearly as huge as ours. We are in every city, county and state in this country and we probably don't even realize how much potential there is to make things happen.

Why couldn't every punk rocker and like-minded youth in Massachusetts cast their vote for senator Jimmy Hardcore in the next election? Maybe senator is too big of a first step, maybe not, but if you think that we need big corporate-sponsored budgets to make this happen, you'd be wrong. We already have the network, it's been in front of our faces for over two decades now. And although the older voters typically hit up the election booths in bigger numbers, we can make the census workers shit their pants by quadrupling the number of voters aged 18-25 this next term... it wouldn't be that hard. And think about how worth it it'd be... to have one of *us* in there, shaking things up, and to stir it up even more we could actually do this as a *real* democracy where the figurehead in his or her powerful position actually listens and represents the public who voted him/her into office. Remember that idea we've all been force-fed, that those in power represent those who elect them... it's currently bullshit. Those in power represent Phillip Morris and the NRA and god-knows what other evil empires helped fund their campaigns.

The greedy corporate devils disguised in old-white-man suits should *not* be pulling the strings any more. If we don't change things now, they're only going to get worse. I don't know about you but I can easily freak myself out when I start to think about the future. Do you trust that moron that's the most powerful man in the world right now? I sure as hell don't. And 20 years from now I'd be a lot more comfortable knowing that we actually voted our current-leader into office rather than him swindling his way in. And if we don't change things now, it'll never be a her, or a person without pale skin because the sickening fear, intimidation and threats associated with being a non-white male or female in power is something that won't just "go away."

Are you interested, do you want to make this happen, or are you just unhappy with things around you in the world today? Write back, write the magazine, write a lot of people and tell them what is wrong. We all know that some things are wrong, but do we all know the solutions? I know I don't, but together we can figure it out and actually change things. And think about it this way... what if we don't? Think about who will be dictating things years from now. The way things currently stand, I don't want to bring a kid into this world, to live in what's destined to be a much more awful world... and I want to have kids, so fuck them, I won't let my disgust simmer and stew any more.

These are the days of our youth, and I'm enjoying mine... are you enjoying yours? I sure hope so, but let's not be too quick to drink or smoke the problems away... they're only going to get worse.

—Earl Whittaker
alittlefurtherdown@yahoo.com

The Case Against Legalization

"For every complex problem," H. L. Mencken once said, "there is a solution that is simple, neat, and wrong." The problem, progressive-minded people agree, is the drug war. Two million people are currently incarcerated in the US, nearly half a million for non-violent drug crimes, a disproportionate number of which are minorities. Not to mention the gang-related violence and corruption that are fueled by the aggressive enforcement of drug laws. All this because the government has designated certain substances to be dangerous to society, and therefore illegal, while our political system creates incentives for politicians to appear "tough on crime" by pushing for more draconian punishments for drug offenders. The result is a costly, heavy-handed, and racist "War on Drugs" waged ferociously in the United States and, increasingly, in other countries as an extension of our foreign policy.

The obvious solution, then, is legalization. Drug crimes don't exist if drugs are legal, after all. This is self-evident because all crime derives from laws; that is, laws are what make certain activities criminal. This makes perfect sense as long as one assumes that the only real problems associated with drugs are those caused by their illegality. Drug prohibition creates drug crimes, so legalize drugs and, poof, no more crime. However, it should be pointed out that no one makes the same argument for rape.

For a long time, people assumed legalization to be an exclusive concern of the Left. Then, as the drug war escalated, public figures and institutions otherwise unsupportive or hostile to progressive issues began to voice their opposition. "For the amount of money that we're putting into the war on drugs...it is an absolute failure," says Republican Governor of New Mexico Gary Johnson. "The case for legalization is overwhelming." Economist Milton Friedman, the "father of neoliberalism," is in favor of legalization. So is William F. Buckley, Jr., editor of the National Review. The Cato Institute, a leading right-wing think tank, is one of the most vocal critics of the drug war. Support for legalization spans the conservative spectrum—from the fringe Right (the Libertarian Party has made ending the drug war #1 on its agenda, ahead of repealing the minimum wage and abolishing public education) to respected mainstream publications like the *Economist*, which ran a cover story in July on "The Case for Legalization."

I work at a well-known left-wing public policy institute in Washington, DC that campaigns actively against the drug war. Our testimonies and publications often cite bipartisan support for legalization. Many progressives who tend to shield themselves from views they don't agree with are surprised to learn about anti-drug war efforts on the Right. Are we actually in the majority, they wonder? Could the other side be coming around to our way of thinking? Not surprisingly, the answer to both questions is no.

The Right's support for legalization developed pretty much independently of the Left, having its own motives for embracing it. This should really be no surprise, because legalization is a classic free-market position. The most radical proposals for legalization invariably come from the most extreme circles of

market fundamentalism—not from leftists, who generally favor some form of regulation. Pundits on the Right view the drug war less in terms of unjust enforcement targeting millions of black men (though politically-savvy pundits pay lip service to it), and more in terms of an unfair restriction of trade. Drugs are a lucrative business, so it must be a great frustration for corporations and their backers—especially those who already profit off of human misery and death, such as the tobacco industry (one of the Cato Institute's biggest financial supporters)—that they can't get in on it. These companies would be the real beneficiaries of legalization; not, as some would like to believe, poor street hustlers, who would all be out of work. James Ostrowski, in a 1989 Cato policy analysis "Thinking About Drug Legalization," can barely contain his glee in imagining these "slick young drug dealers" being unemployed and having to look for real jobs.

As for the first question, drug legalization is still not a cause that enjoys broad popular support. While awareness of the excesses of the drug war is growing, most Americans reject outright legalization of even soft drugs like marijuana. In spite of the propaganda from both sides, most people recognize something that anti-drug war crusaders are slow to admit: that drug use itself causes many serious problems, which is why it was prohibited in the first place. And to expect these problems to magically disappear once drugs are legal is simply foolish.

Everyone knows about the gang wars and police brutality. But what about addiction, domestic violence, child abuse, the spread of disease? The pundits who live in gated communities can safely ignore them, but for people who live in neighborhoods affected by drugs, they are a daily reality. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that these social ills would be no more prevalent with legalization. In a ten-year study on "Drug War Heresies: Learning from Other Vices, Times, and Places," researchers Robert MacCoun and Peter Reuter concluded that legalization would lead to reductions in drug-related crimes, but also to significant increases in drug use and addiction. No convincing evidence suggests otherwise. Legalization proponents often maintain that alcohol consumption did not dramatically increase after Prohibition ended; however, to compare a substance consumed by the vast majority of adults before and during Prohibition to crystal meth or even ecstasy is misleading. Consumption of alcohol did remain low immediately after Prohibition, as there still remained a plethora of restrictions and taxes on alcohol sales. Once those restrictions were lifted and mass marketing kicked in, consumption rates rose nearly 70% between 1940 and 1975. As a nation, we are not predisposed to do anything in moderation. This is why Europeans drink a glass of wine with dinner, while we drink a 30-pack of Rolling Rock in a night. And advertisers have never hesitated to pander to Americans' inclinations to binge.

These predictions are not blind speculation. It's basic economics. Because prohibition keeps drug prices artificially high, legalization would cause prices to fall drastically, sparking an increase in demand, leading to a surge in the supply of drugs going to mostly poor and minority neighborhoods. This is why people who listen to inner-city community activists, church leaders, or radical hip hop artists know that their chief concern is, in the words of Dead Prez, how to get crack out of the ghetto. It's not how to make crack cheaper and more readily available. What our (mostly white, well-off) legalization proponents have yet to present is a comprehensive plan as to how we might actually get crack out of the ghetto, rather than simply pointing out that the "War on Drugs" isn't helping.

More often than not, legalization proponents fall back on narrow philosophical precepts to back their arguments. None have put it so eloquently as John Stuart Mill when he wrote, "The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of the community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant." This is the concept of victimless crime: it's my business what I put into my body, and if I want to be strung out on smack the rest of my life, it's not your concern. The problem is that this concept does not reflect how our society is actually governed. Drunk driving is against the law, even though the act of driving drunk doesn't hurt anyone by itself, it increases the likelihood that someone will be killed—even if it's only the driver. And in real life, every individual's actions affect others, unless you live on a desert island. Tell it to the child of an alcoholic parent that drugs affect only the user.

The philosophical defense is couched in appeals to personal freedom, using the same selective definition of freedom employed to justify the right of rich people not to pay taxes: a freedom from all social obligations. When applied to drug use, however, the preservation of liberty is a dubious defense because the use of addictive drugs has the exact effect of restricting one's personal freedom. Addiction limits the choices and interests of drug users, directing their behavior toward scoring their next fix. The idea of free exchange based on rational interests is as absurd for a heroin addict as it is for a starving person negotiating with a merchant for food.

Resisting the drug war is a worthy cause. There can be nothing more detrimental to it than the wholesale disregard for the actual effects of drug abuse exhibited by many activists. It is especially distressing to see it among those who claim to fight for social justice. There is nothing progressive about defending the interests of those suppliers who are most responsible for the destruction of poor and minority communities—or, for that matter, supporting them financially by buying drugs. Legalization should be recognized for what it is: a cause for corporate capitalists. Progressives and radicals would do better to look for ways to put a stop to the many injustices of the drug war: an end to racial profiling and the criminalization of entire communities, treatment and rehabilitation instead of incarceration, and needle exchange programs. Crime, however, will be with us as long as inequality exists, and is best addressed by efforts to build a more just and equitable society.

More than any other industry, the drug trade is a system of oppression and exploitation. Drug abuse—that includes alcohol—is not a benign consumer choice, nor is it a byproduct of the law. It is a social problem, with or without the drug war, and should be acknowledged it as such. The "War on Drugs" is no solution, and neither is legalization.

I know that by the time this issue is on the stands the one-year anniversary of September 11th will have long since passed, but I couldn't very well have predicted how I would spend the days leading up to it, right?

Countdown to the Warm Cozies

September 1st: I return home from a month on the west coast. It seems my house hasn't had hot water in two weeks; there is a new rockabilly band who's moved in downstairs, and one of my housemates is planning his wedding. Immediately, I'm stricken by the feeling that I never should have left; as if I were here I could've prevented any of this from happening. As if I don't carry around my own personal cloud of shit and tumult. Eventually, the airport found my luggage and brought it to my house. Three t-shirts, a sweater, and 80 copies of my zine, safe.

September 2nd: Labor Day means no work for many of our nation's gainfully employed, and I'm fully taking advantage of the hard-won victories of this great nation's labor movement by catching up on the mountain of mail that's been waiting for me in my absence. I heard Labor Day explained to a friend from New Zealand as "kind of like fake May Day", which I thought was pretty funny.

September 3rd: My first day back at the library went by pretty quick. All my coworkers told me how much they missed me and asked "now exactly *what* were you doing on this trip?" I got plenty of compliments on my fabulous new tan and beard. With the down time that necessarily comes with hours spent at my job, I dwelled for a few moments on the rapidity of the year's passing, the shortening of the day, and the first subtle hints of autumn's chill. Before tour, I would ride my bike home from work and see the sunset as I headed west from downtown into Olneyville. Tonight, the sun had already dipped behind the factories as I headed home.

September 4th: Going back over the figures sketched out previous to my departure for tour, I realize that my last paycheck is just plain wrong. I've two dollars to my name and rent was due 3

days ago; in two days it will be *really* due. I experienced a minor panic and began scheming.

September 5th: Mayor Cianci's farewell to the city was in the paper today, on the eve of his sentencing for corruption charges. Only in Providence can a twice-convicted felon (1984 saw Cianci relieved from his position as "Mayor of Rhode Island" upon conviction for assault charges) submit a piece to the paper and have it framed by salutatory praises. In the same issue of *The Providence Journal*, however, Cianci's interim replacement, City Council President John Lombardi, accused the departing mayor of making off with city property while cleaning out the ol' desk drawers. Big laughs all around.

September 6th: By now, it's hard to quell the slowly swelling lump in our collective throat as the networks gear up for the big anniversary. Todd Gitlin, former president of Students for a Democratic Society, called for, in the pages of the New York Times Op-ed section, an end to the left's "reflexive negativity" and "flag anxiety", citing Nader's Greens as responsible for a political alienation wherein the left shuns political coalitions as shallow and ineffectual. I can't argue with his idea that we can't dismiss the political system wholesale; however, how unfortunate is his timing with the whole "can't we all just get along" bit? If anything worthwhile comes of this year- anniversary- of-the- police- state mania, it will be a chance to reconsider all the apologetics and walking on eggshells. We're well set into the worst-case scenario, or at least the next-to-worst-case scenario, and it's going to take more than a prime-time snappy-answers-to-stupid questions resolution to *heal the hurt of September 11th.*

September 7th: Even on Saturdays, there is no relaxing. And oh yeah, Cianci got 5 years and 10 months, plus 150 hours of community service. I can't help but wonder if the fact is going to change that you can't park on the street overnight in this city.

In the New York Times magazine section today, staff architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable is quoted as referring to the Twin Towers as "the biggest tombstones in the world". In 1966. Fucking weird.

September8th: Man, I just don't like kids anymore. Not like "the kids", but you know, young people.

September9th: Today Rhode Island's diocese, representing the most Catholic state in the union with 614,000 Catholics out of a population of about a million, reached a 13.5 million dollar settlement with 36 victims of abuse. In other news, a cement truck flying an obscenely large flag- oh yeah, an *American* flag- comes dangerously close to ending my life. In the media, Ashcroft assuages a nation's nerves by telling the worried public to simply "keep being America." The public responds by scratching its head in a not-unfamiliar gesture of puzzlement.

September 10th: I don't think Beat Happening ever fell into MRR's rubric, but they were a punk rock band; if you don't think so, I don't care. Calvin Johnson played an in store for free today at a local record shop (whose name I will mention because they still sell the magazine- In Your Ear), and I was pleasantly surprised by his forthrightness. While at his worst, he's a Yankee Morrissey, preening and self-promoting; his set was confrontational without any sort of fake intimidation or angst that makes a cartoon of bands that *try too hard* to be "crazy". I don't think any of the Ivy Leaguers or college town hangers-on crammed into the room knew who he was. They were all there to see indy rock sensation Phil Elvrum aka The Microphones, who was pretty good too.

September 11th: I wake up in time to make coffee before embarking on a full day. Housemate Mara is slowly coming to life in the kitchen as I put the water on to boil. Halfway into my cup of coffee, I'm touched by curiosity,"You know, I haven't listened to the radio or anything..." Last year today Art woke me up in a panic saying some nonsense about airplanes flying into the World Trade Center...this morning I remember I've been shooting my mouth off about making a before and after WTC cake for my house. Fuck, I'm just not gonna have time. It was going to be chocolate with sprinkles...toothpicks...cashews...

The Times today ran an article detailing exactly how bad the airlines are doing. Delta is leading the way to scrap terminal carry-on searches. After the industry lost 10 billion dollars last year, they've approached the Federal Security Agency saying they can only afford 300 million dollars of the 750 million they're expected to pay to the government for next year's security budget. I'm most concerned about how much of this money is going to the security guards at every stop on my flight from Providence to Olympia and back who experienced a genuine existential quandary over whether or not I could carry my bridge stapler onto the aircraft.

The computer at work anticipates the phrase "September 11, 2002" halfway through typing it. In a near-supernatural weather instance, the temperature drops 10 degrees in an hour and a heavy wind knocks all the plants off the windowsills in my house. A 5 hour Greyhound ride away, the names of the roughly 3000[1] who died in the World Trade Center is being read at "Ground Zero", which I'm still expected to consider to be somehow more hallowed than any of the numerous other ground zeros being leveled every day in nations more remote, Godless, uncivilized, or somehow fiscally challenged. In parts unknown, angels are standing in line to get their wings as a city full of champagne glasses are raised to those that have died in the course of maintaining a culture's propensity for discussing airline profits, real estate markets, and interest rates.

[1] (1) To be totally callous and predictable, I have to cite the *1.5 million* that our country's attacks and sanctions in Iraq have wiped off the face of the planet, a number that will begin mounting as soon as the Bush administration pushes through the "regime change" that no one but Tony Blaire seems to be buying.

"Why is it rock stars always seem to lie so much?"

—Rudimentary Peni

It's frustrating, you know—to see the gradual appropriation of a culture which can be such a threat to the status quo. At times I feel helpless as I watch the bastards gradually round off the edges and polish all the blemishes to make punk more marketable, more palatable, and more importantly, more profitable. Sometimes it seems as though the parts which matter most—community, cooperation, and hell, just being fucking punk—have been surgically removed and all we're left with is a lifeless corpse, going through the motions of youthful rebellion. I still hold true my belief that what is important and radical about punk rock is not the lyrical content but instead its independence. The medium still is the message. Reading the letter Dave from *Fracture* (an amazing zine from the UK, I highly recommend searching it out) sent me in regards to their upcoming issue which deals with the question of co-option of the underground, I thought to myself—who the fuck cares about Jimmy Eat World, New Found Glory, Hatebreed, Blood Brothers, or any other of those fucking sellouts—because for every band that cashes in after using the punk rock network as a stepping stool to grab at that elusive brass ring of rockstardom, there are thousands that still believe in punk rock as something more than that. Concentrating on the assholes who use us only depresses me, so I try not to do it, preferring to think more about those who inspire and prove that this is and can be so much more. But sometimes the list of bastards just seems to get too long, and I have to stop and think to myself, just what the fuck is going on?

Major media corporations want to control your access to information and ideas, by which they can, in turn, influence your opinions—keeping you in line as a proper and upstanding citizen. I believe that punk is, and should be, a part of a widespread culture of independent resistance. It should be a spit in the face of mainstream culture, not a suckling piglet in line for its chance to gobble at some rich bastard's teat.

An idea that has been thrown around a bit lately is the concept that since the lines between what is independent and what is owned by those infamous corporate media monoliths is so blurred at this point, that we should just throw up our hands and not give a shit. Personally, I think that is quite possibly the weakest, most asinine argument I've yet to hear. At a time when media outlets (not just record labels) are being swallowed up by a smaller and smaller number of mega-corporations, I feel that it is perhaps more important than ever to support independent media outlets, and more important to not get involved in the

business of making these bastards money. It is at this time when we should be ever-diligent against the co-option of not only punk, but all forms of independent sources of information, entertainment and hell, even snacks! Punk is just one piece of the pie in the struggle against the corporations which seek to dominate our lives—to me it is just part of a greater culture of defiance against these bastards. I also feel that the lines are not as blurred as some would like you to believe—and in fact are quite clear. Labels with exclusive production and distribution deals with major labels are not independent—no matter how much they might like to claim they are. When your projects are being funded by the likes of Sony, you better believe they are going to have some say into the nature of what you release… it may not be as simple a matter as Sony picking and choosing which band you work with, but their influence will be felt as the need to turn a stated amount of profit weighs down on the label's head. Soon just putting out whatever you like because you care about it, no matter if it will only sell 300 copies, doesn't come into play anymore. Instead what matters is shifting units and proper marketing techniques. The bottom line becomes the most important thing. And what should be a fun, vibrant, and creative scene/community becomes about business and nothing more. Unfortunately this is the path all too many of yours and my friends have gone down, and will continue to go down.

Just over one hundred issues have passed since *MRR*'s infamous Major Labels issue, with the cover photo of one sad punk holding a 9mm pistol in his mouth—complete with the caption "Some of your friends are already this fucked." Eight years later and I think that it couldn't be more true.

Endnotes:
1) Have you seen the *Rolling Stone* cover heralding the return of rock? I never knew that it went away. Ah, mainstream rock journalists, such a pathetic out of touch lot. And the bands they tout—THE VINES, THE STROKES, THE WHITE STRIPES—what a bunch of fucking garbage.
2) One should really make an effort to see LA's OUT OF VOGUE if one gets a chance. Killer pissed off suburban angst filled hardcore like mom used to make.
3) We still need help with getting the radio show into syndication, so if you have any leads with local independent radio stations, or even just suggestions of stations that it should be on, please get in touch via MRRradio@mindspring.com
4) If you would please denote that the ad rates have risen slightly. We've done this in order to help cover an increase in shipping costs since we left Mordam. Thanks for your continued support!
5) I can always be contacted by writing to the *MRR* PO Box or via the information superhighway at mikethorn@mindspring.com

Reasonable people in unreasonable times suffer, to speak their minds. Especially when they're women.

In the militant fervor immediately following Sept. 11th, 2001, Senator Barbara Lee (D-California) stood up in the House of Representatives and deplored the proposal of retaliatory force against the Taliban by the Bush administration.

She was, she said, "convinced that military action (would) not prevent further acts of international terrorism," and called for a more complex, thoughtful response.

The affectionate praise she received at home in the SF Bay Area ("Barbara Lee speaks for me") was not repeated on Capitol Hill. She received threats in her office and was framed as a curiosity, at best, on CNN.

On Sept. 18th, 2002, Medea Benjamin and Diane Wilson stood up in Congress behind US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who was making a case for military action against Iraq, and cried, "Inspections, not war!" Benjamin also asked the following questions before the women were hauled away by Capitol police: "How many civilians would be killed? How would they protect us against the backlash of anti-Americanism? Why is this all about oil? Why is it coming up now? Can't we wait until after elections? Why is the Bush administration stopping this inspection process? Why don't we put it back in the hands of the Security Council?"

CNN and MSNBC praised Rumsfeld for his "quick comeback" from the interruption—the impeccably reasoned comment that in Saddam Hussein's country, the women would not be able to voice their opinions. Reported later on CNN, anchor Leon Harris said, "We see you did not get locked up today. We will see whether or not your luck holds out."

It goes without saying that Benjamin's questions were never answered.

On Sept. 19th, 2002 Herta Däubler-Gmelin, a minister in German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's Social Democratic administration, commented to a regional newspaper that "Bush wants to divert attention from his domestic problems. It's a classic tactic. It's one that Hitler also used."

When challenged, Schröder was quick to assert that Däubler-Gmelin had compared the two leaders' tactics, not the men themselves. If she had compared Mr. Bush to a criminal, said Schröder, she would no longer have a place in his cabinet. Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer called Däubler-Gmelin's statement "outrageous" and "inexplicable." German conservatives called for her immediate dismissal.

Does anyone doubt the words exchanged about these brave women behind the closed doors of the centers of power? The epithets may vary, but I know what they'll sound like. They'll be full of the dismissive violence reserved for women who threaten men's power. This brand of outrage is familiar, to women. Punitive on the one hand, patronizing on the other, the male administration bellows, "How dare you talk back to me?"

••••

OK, the SNOBS, from Texas, are all 14 and go on tour with their dads. The novelty appeal here is obviously really high, when you also consider fact that they have a totally raw, early 80s sound. Last month we reviewed the "Heart Full of Napalm" 7" by the DISKORDS, more 14-year-olds, that, seriously, sounds like it was recorded in 1978. ÅMDI PETERSEN'S ARMÉ, the "huh? which Black Flag record is that?" band from Copenhagen, inlcudes several members under the age of 20. HIT ME BACK, high energy LA hardcore on the LIFES HALT family tree, features yet another young teen on the mic. All of these bands play older punk styles with surprisingly edginess and energy.

(Tangent: watching punk boys my age watching these younger kids play music reminds me of when younger kids started invading Bay Area skateboarding spots in the early 90s. My skater boyfriend and his friends shook their heads at the hyperkinetic new tricks with a combination of awe and exasperation. Though they were barely out of their teens themselves, they would run their hands nervously over their scruffy hair, as if checking for bald spots. It's kind of funny.)

It's rad that young punks are picking up the mantle, starting out a bit derivative, but perhaps on the way to an original sound. But I can't help feeling a little resentful, at the same time.

All members of all the bands I listed above are young boys. Most of them first heard punk one or two years ago, but were easily initiated, with support from their fathers or older boys in the scene. In contrast, young girls often have a hard time defining themselves and staking their claims in the punk scene, partly because they get so little support. It's a little grating that these young bands receive more admiration in months than do girls and women who have been in the scene for years, playing music or doing more behind-the-scenes type stuff.

None of this is the fault of the bands, per se, but shouldn't those of us who are old enough to know better examine where we point the hype machine? Shouldn't we give more credit where credit is (over)due? The more that happens, the sooner we'll be able to rock out to more young girl punk bands (I mean who write their *own songs*, duh) who sound a little too much like the X-Ray Spex or—for that matter—like Black Flag.

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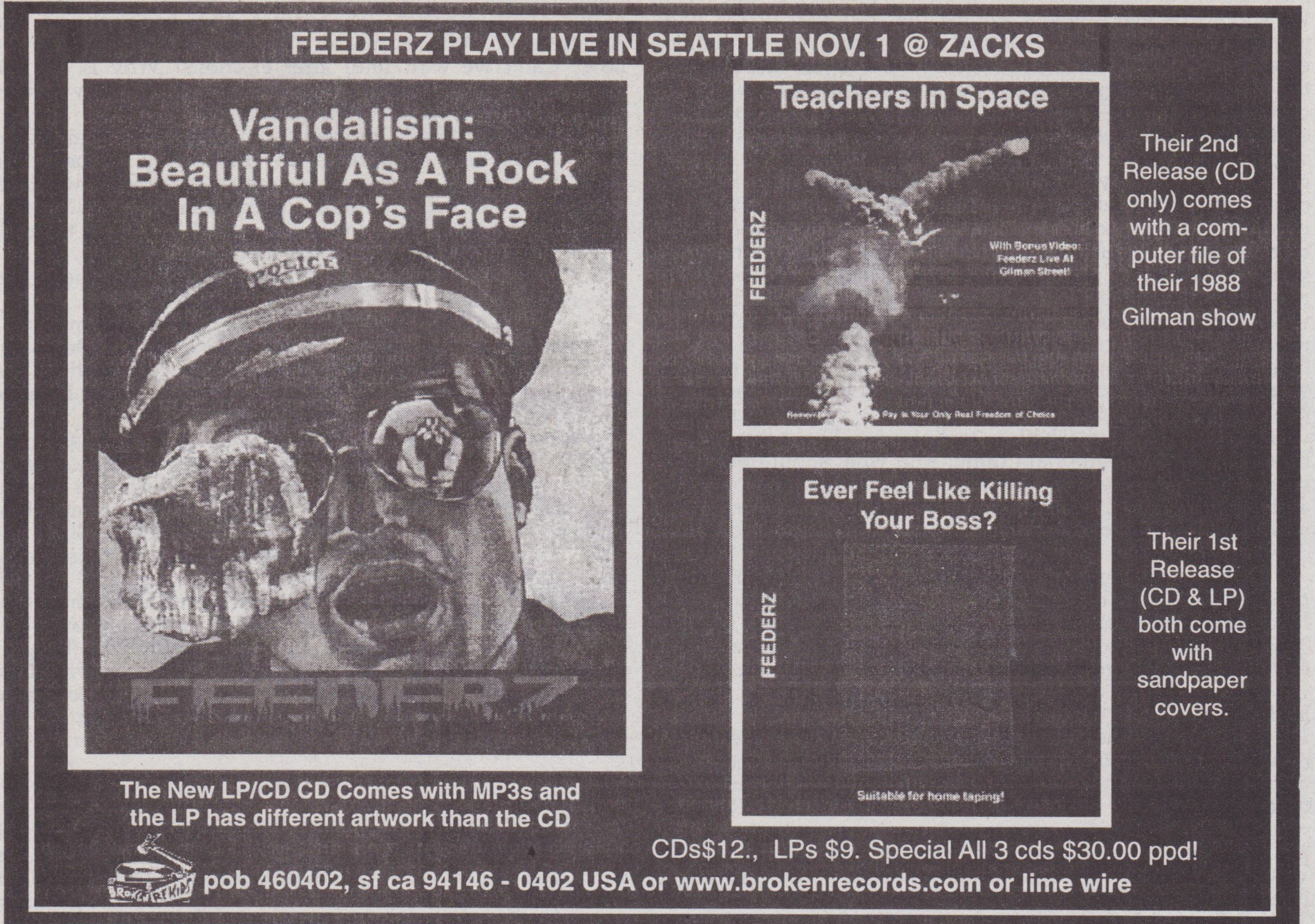
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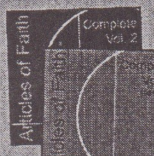

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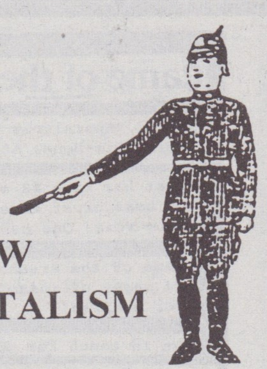

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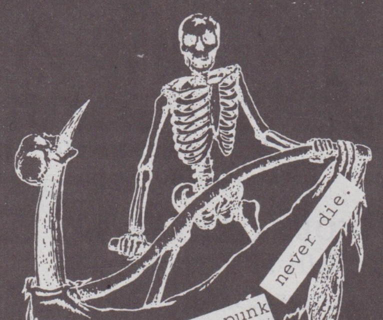

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No. 234
Nov. 2002
compiled by:
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US BENT ON ATTACKING IRAQ, MIDEAST EXPERTS SAY

by Thalif Deen
published by Inter Press Service

UNITED NATIONS—The United States is likely to launch a military attack on Iraq despite President Saddam Hussein's decision to invite UN arms inspectors into his country, Middle East experts and legal scholars predicted Wednesday.

"It appears that the US administration is dead-set on a war against Iraq no matter what," Francis Boyle, professor of international law at the University of Illinois in Chicago, told IPS.

Boyle said that US Vice President Dick Cheney has already made it clear that inspections were really not the issue. The United States is bent on "regime change" in Iraq, which Boyle points out, "is prohibited under the terms of the United Nations charter."

Chris Toensing, editor of the Washington-based *Middle East Report*, said the administration had invested too much political capital in "regime change" to give up its hard-line.

"Administration officials have a history of saying that arms inspections cannot be trusted to contain the 'mortal threat' of the Iraqi regime's putative weapons of mass destruction," he added.

Ironically, Toensing argued, the United States may now try to delay the return of inspectors in order to give Saddam the opportunity to change his mind.

Fearing that UN inspectors would declare their readiness to move into Iraq immediately, the United States and Britain Wednesday played for time while trying to strengthen their case for a military attack on Baghdad.

At the UN Security Council, the two veto-wielding permanent members wanted to postpone a briefing by Hans Blix, head of the arms inspection team, the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC).

"The last thing that the United States and Britain want is for Blix to come before the Security Council and say that his team is ready to leave for Iraq in the next two weeks," a Third World diplomat told IPS.

He said the countries do not want movement until they can push through a resolution laying down tough new conditions on Iraq.

US President George Bush said Wednesday that Iraq's invitation is "a ploy, a tactic. (Saddam) is not going to fool anybody," Bush added.

He also reaffirmed that Washington would seek a new Security Council resolution before UN inspectors are sent to Baghdad.

On Tuesday, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov publicly disagreed with the United States, arguing there is no need for a new resolution.

The Security Council, he said, should send the inspection team as soon as possible to determine the key issue in dispute: whether or not Iraq still possesses weapons of mass destruction.

While the United States and Britain wanted Blix to appear before the Council on Monday, the other 13 members wanted the meeting held immediately. As a compromise, the Council decided to summon Blix on Thursday.

Ali Abunimah of the Chicago-based Arab-American Action Network said the issue of inspections is a test of the intentions and sincerity of the United States—as it is of Iraq.

After all, he said, Iraq did for the most part cooperate with nine years of arms inspections, resulting in the destruction of the vast majority of its weapons by 1998.

"We shall see whether, as many people in the world suspect, the United States had simply used the demand for renewed inspections as a pretext for war, calculating that Iraq would not go along with them, or whether the United States is prepared to seek a genuine solution to the crisis in partnership with the international community," he added.

Hans von Sponeck, a former UN assistant secretary-general who headed the UN "oil-for-food" humanitarian program, said the worst thing that could happen to the US/UK plans to attack Iraq is for UN inspectors to conclude that there is no 'imminent threat' from Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

"The two governments will therefore retain a tough line and look for any opportunity to disrupt the inspection process," von Sponeck told IPS.

When UN inspectors left Iraq in December 1998, there were charges that the United States had planted its own intelligence agents in the former inspection team—the UN Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM)—in order to gather politically and militarily sensitive information on Iraq.

Since then, the country has insisted that no Americans or Britons should be part of the team.

But Von Sponeck said the new team should include US and UK members as a matter of balance.

Blix and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will have "a formidable responsibility to ensure that the days of UNSCOM spying will not return," he added.

"They must be prepared to deal with firmness and total impartiality with any signs of misuse of the inspectors' mandate. Such misuse could make the difference between peaceful resolution of this conflict or war," he added.

But Boyle insisted that US and UK nationals be excluded from the inspections team because of the previous history of spying and of the countries using inspections as a cloak to select targets for bombing.

"Right now, the United States and Britain are bombing Iraq as we speak here, clearly in violation of the terms of the United Nations Charter," he added.

UN ANNOUNCES PROBE OF MASS GRAVES IN AFGHANISTAN

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters)—The United Nations will investigate alleged war crimes and mass graves in Afghanistan where many people died under suspicious circumstances, a top UN official said on Thursday.

Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN special envoy for Afghanistan, cautioned that it would be difficult to guarantee the safety of witnesses and investigators and that it is not certain a probe could be completed.

But he told the UN Security Council on Thursday that Afghan's transitional government and the UN mission there have agreed that several sites should be investigated.

Up to 1,000 Taliban or al Qaeda fighters reportedly suffocated in airless container trucks after surrendering to Northern Alliance forces under Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum late last year.

Dostum denies deliberately killing Taliban prisoners, but admits around 200 may have died while being transported to a prison near Dostum's northern stronghold of Shiberghan.

He said most died of wounds sustained during fighting and general physical weakness rather than of suffocation.

Earlier this month, Brahimi indicated he did not favor holding a full inquiry. But on Thursday, referring to the mass grave at Dasht-e-Leily near Shiberghan, he told the Security Council there was a good reason to investigate.

"I think it is fairly certain that a large number of people died in, to say the least, suspicious circumstances," he said.

Brahimi indicated the probe would encompass several sites, including some
suspected victims of the Taliban, the Islamic group that ruled most of Afghanistan before being ousted by US-backed forces after the Sept. 11 attacks.

The UN mission has asked the UN human rights agency to help identify forensic teams for the probe, he said.

Brahami said additional security will be needed from the Afghan government, local authorities and the international community to enable investigators to do their work.

"It will probably be possible to do the forensic part of the investigation. Whether and when it will be possible to actually conclude the investigation is another matter," he said.

IN QUIETLY COURTING AFRICA, U.S. LIKES THE DOWRY: OIL

by James Dao
published in the *New York Times*

Africa, the neglected stepchild of American diplomacy, is rising in strategic importance to Washington policy makers, and one word sums up the reason: oil.

Africa already provides about 15 percent of the United States' crude oil imports, but its share is expected to grow rapidly from new production in West Africa and construction of a pipeline linking southern Chad to Atlantic ports.

Within the next decade, recently discovered offshore reserves are expected to enable West Africa to outproduce the North Sea's oil rigs and capture as much as 25 percent of America's oil-import market.

Though the Persian Gulf will remain the nation's primary source of imported crude, the new African oil could reduce dependence on countries like Saudi Arabia, whose relations with the United States have been strained in the year since the Sept. 11 attacks.

"The key to security of supply is diversity of supply," said Robin West, chairman of the Petroleum Financing Company, a consulting firm for the industry. "And I would argue that West Africa in the near to medium term will be a more important source of oil to international markets than Russia."

The Bush administration demonstrated its growing interest in Africa by sending Secretary of State Colin L. Powell there two weeks ago on a three-nation tour. President Bush has said he intends to visit early next year.

"Energy from Africa plays an increasingly important role in our energy security," Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham told the House International Relations Committee in June.

New African oil will probably not flow fast enough to compensate for lost Iraqi production if the United States begins an invasion. In the first half of this year, the United States imported 110 million barrels of crude oil from Iraq. But African sources could eventually help soften price shocks during times of upheaval in the Middle East.

African oil has other advantages. Much of it lies beneath the Atlantic or near the West African coast, which makes it simpler to transport to the United States than oil from the Persian Gulf or the Caspian Sea.

Moreover, Nigeria is the only sub-Saharan country that belongs to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, which means that much of Africa's new production will not be constrained by any cartel quotas.

Gabon was an OPEC member but quit in 1995, and Nigeria is considering quitting, a move that analysts believe would sharply weaken the organization's grip on world markets. "There is a long-term strategy from the U.S. government to weaken OPEC's hold on the market," said Roger Diwan, a managing director of the Petroleum Finance Company, "and one way to do that is to peel off certain countries."

The Bush administration has not trumpeted its interest in African oil, partly to avoid antagonizing its Middle Eastern allies and partly to avoid generating a perception that it cares only about Africa's resources. But the administration has intensified its diplomatic activity with several African governments, sending clear signals that it is paying closer attention.

Secretary Powell, for example, visited Angola and Gabon, both major oil exporters to the United States that rarely receive high-ranking American officials. (He was the first American secretary of state to visit Gabon.) On Monday he addressed the United Nations on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, a multinational group seeking to increase investment in the continent.

Last Friday, Mr. Bush met with the leaders of 10 African countries at the United Nations, urging them to uphold agreements to end conflicts in Congo and elsewhere, and requesting their help in the effort against terrorism.

The president has also announced plans to visit Africa early next year, with a possible stop in Nigeria, the largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa and the fifth-largest exporter of oil to the United States.

"I think the administration is cognizant that we need to engage across the board with Africa," said Representative Edward R. Royce, California Republican and chairman of African subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee. "Paying Africa the diplomatic attention it deserves is important."

The State Department also plans to reopen a consulate in Equatorial Guinea that was closed for budgetary reasons in the 1990s. American oil companies have been expanding operations there to take advantage of recently discovered offshore reserves.

During his visit to Angola, Secretary Powell broke ground for an embassy building in Luanda, where American diplomats have been working for years in temporary buildings known as the Trailer Park.

"This has been the end of the food chain for many years," Secretary Powell told embassy employees during the ground breaking. "But we're here to stay."

There has also been discussion in Congress and the Pentagon about increasing military exchanges with West African countries and perhaps establishing a military base in the region, possibly on São Tomé, an island nation in the Gulf of Guinea.

In their meetings with African leaders, administration officials have talked less about oil and more about getting African governments to end regional conflicts, reduce corruption, protect human rights, improve schools and expand social services. As an incentive to better government, they have offered increased American aid through a new program called the Millennium Challenge Account.

But administration officials acknowledge that greater stability will enhance oil production and encourage investment and trade. At a time when South American oil exporters like Venezuela and Colombia are enduring civil war and unrest, officials say, many African countries—including Angola and Congo—have made progress toward resolving long-standing conflicts.

"Ultimately, it is the market that determines how many barrels are produced," said a senior State Department official. "But greater stability and transparency makes them more efficient sources. If you have petroleum dollars increasing the health and education of their people, and not flowing into someone's Swiss bank account, that makes for more efficient production."

Oil analysts project that a quarter of all the new, non-Persian Gulf oil that comes onto the world market over the next five years will come from sub-Saharan Africa.

"In the industry, there is a lot of excitement about West Africa," said Daniel Yergin, chairman of Cambridge Energy Research Associates. "Its politics may be complex, but the transportation and logistics are easier."

Nigeria is expected to raise production over 3 million barrels a day by 2007, from 2.2 million now, according to the Petroleum Finance Company. Angola's daily production is projected to double, to nearly 2 million barrels. Chad is expected to produce 225,000 barrels a day once a $3.5 billion pipeline through Cameroon is completed in 2004. Production in tiny Equatorial Guinea is expected nearly to double, to 350,000 barrels a day, within three years.

Before the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States viewed Africa mainly as a cold war battleground. Washington pumped aid into governments that proclaimed themselves anti-Communist and supported Jonas Savimbi's efforts to oust the pro-Moscow government in Angola.

During the 1990s, the Clinton administration tried to increase trade and investment in Africa, while promoting efforts to fight AIDS. But there was not a sense that the continent was strategically important. Oil is changing that perception.

"The oil stakes in Africa are rising," said J. Stephen Morrison, director of the Africa program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington-based policy group. "The question is: to what degree can growth in production be accelerated, and to what degree is our political posture toward these countries important to the flow of oil?"

CUPS OF COFFEE FILLED WITH INJUSTICE

by Sanjay Suri
Published by Inter Press Service

Six donkeys carried mock-ups of coffee sacks to the London Stock Exchange Wednesday. They were not delivering coffee, they were delivering a message about the burden that coffee companies are placing on poor coffee growers in developing countries.

The sacks were dumped at the stock exchange to symbolise the collapse in world coffee prices. The picture event was organised by Oxfam as a part of its "coffee rescue plan" to demand a decent price to be paid to coffee farmers.

Oxfam says 25 million coffee farmers in 45 countries are facing economic ruin, and many are going hungry because of collapsing world prices. Oxfam's global campaign aims to force corporate giants who dominate the 60 billion dollar industry to pay a better price. Oxfam's campaign is particularly targeting the largest four companies—Kraft, Nestle, Sara Lee, and Procter & Gamble—who buy nearly half the world's coffee crop.

Only about 5 per cent of the money that coffee generates reaches the poor farmers, Oxfam says. "They know there is terrible human

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NOW THEY CHECK THE BOOKS YOU READ

by Joan E. Bertin
Published in *the Long Island, NY Newsday*

In the post 9/11 world, there is undoubtedly a government official whose job is to invent innocuous-sounding, if not reassuring, acronyms for government initiatives against terrorism.

Operation TIPS is a case in point. The Terrorism Information and Prevention System will recruit millions of utility, transportation and other workers to report on "potentially unusual or suspicious activity in public places." In other words, Operations TIPS is using private citizens to spy on each other.

The Bush administration's reliance on acronyms with public-relations punch was apparent as early as last October when, still reeling from the events of Sept. 11, it proposed and Congress swiftly passed the USA Patriot Act ("The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism" Act of 2001). Like Operation TIPS, the label doesn't tell the whole story.

Among the less well-known aspects of the Patriot Act are provisions permitting the Justice Department to obtain information secretly from booksellers and librarians about customers' and patrons' reading, Internet and book-buying habits, merely by alleging that the records are relevant to an anti-terrorism investigation. The act prohibits librarians and booksellers from disclosing these subpoenas, so the objects of investigation don't know and therefore cannot defend themselves and their privacy, or contest the government's actions in court.

In a sample of 1,000 libraries responding to a survey last February, 85 reported receiving requests to turn over information about patrons to police or FBI agents. We have no way to know how many other libraries, and how many booksellers, received similar requests. We don't know how many requests were made under the Patriot Act, because of its secrecy provisions. What we do know is that the Patriot Act authorizes the government to obtain information secretly from librarians and booksellers about customers' and patrons' interests and activities, and that law enforcement officials are seeking such information. The Justice Department has refused to provide any data about these investigations, even to Congress.

Librarians and booksellers have voiced their dismay at being conscripted, under court order and threat of prosecution, to report covertly on their patrons and customers. Secretly obtaining information about what people read, to try to figure out what they think, undermines more than privacy; it threatens core First Amendment principles, as many librarians and booksellers understand.

The Constitution clearly protects the right to read a book, embrace an idea or express a thought—even an unpopular or "unpatriotic" book, idea or thought. The freedom of thought and expression is so fundamental to our democracy that, as the Supreme Court recently noted, the "government may not prohibit speech because it increases the chance an unlawful act will be committed 'at some indefinite future time.'" In so holding, the court relied on the "vital distinction between words and deed, between ideas and conduct." In other words, the government is free to prohibit and punish illegal conduct, but may not criminalize ideas or punish people for their thoughts. Perversely, under the Patriot Act, reading certain books or researching certain topics—both constitutionally protected activities—now apparently provide grounds for criminal investigation.

The Justice Department's recent decision to repeal the domestic terrorism surveillance guidelines unmistakably sends this signal. The guidelines were adopted in 1976 in response to revelations that, under the infamous COINTELPRO ("counterintelligence") program, civil rights and anti-war activists who were neither accused nor suspected of crimes became targets of government investigation because of their outspoken criticism of government policies. To prevent such abuses, the 1976 guidelines authorized surveillance of political, religious and other groups only if there was actual evidence of criminal activity. Without this restriction, covert surveillance of political dissidents with no known connection to criminal activity is bound to resume.

According to a brief recently filed by the Justice Department in defense of secret immigration hearings, the "First Amendment creates no general right of access to government information or operations." The gag order imposed on librarians and booksellers goes even further in withholding information from the object of an investigation. As a result, proceedings under the act will be shrouded in secrecy, not only making it impossible for targeted individuals to counter the government's allegations, but also preventing the public at large from making an informed judgment about whether the government is effectively countering terrorism or unfairly targeting innocent people.

The rush to enact programs with reassuring-sounding names may have been understandable a year ago. Now, however, it would be patriotic to consider whether, despite their appealing acronyms, some hastily enacted programs threaten the freedoms we value most. It is peculiar, to say the least, for our government to fight terrorists by adopting their techniques—secrecy and intimidation.

Besides, exactly how many terrorists does the FBI expect to find through the local library or the bookstore?

Joan E. Bertin is executive director of the National Coalition Against Censorship.

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suffering at the heart of their business and yet they do virtually nothing to help," says Oxfam's Campaigns Director Adrian Lovett. "It's time to shame them and change them."

The campaign has brought some talk of change. Nestle, the Swiss multinational, announced earlier this week that it is prepared to take steps to halt the fall in the price of coffee beans. The announcement followed several weeks of negotiations with Oxfam representatives.

Nestlé says it will consider a return to an agreement similar to the quotas system introduced in 1962 to prevent overproduction and keep prices stable. The agreement broke down in 1989 when the U.S. backed out. But none of the other major companies have supported this move. A spokeswoman for Kraft said only that the situation should be improved by stimulating demand.

Oxfam welcomed the Nestle offer. "It is a good sign that they agree with us that action needs to be taken," Eliot Whittington from Oxfam told IPS. "But we would like to see action, not just talk of action."

The crisis has come about after several bumper coffee crops in Brazil and huge production in Vietnam. Average prices for coffee beans have fallen by half over the past three years to about a dollar and ten cents a kilogram.

Within this price the farmers can expect to receive on average only 14 cents for a kilogram of unprocessed green coffee beans. A cup of coffee in a London coffee house sells for three to four dollars.

Prices have fallen below the price of production in many countries. "This is lower than the price in the Depression," says Nestor Osario, president of the International Coffee Organisation (ICO) in London.

The ICO which represents the coffee producing countries says the consequences have been catastrophic for countries such as Kenya and Vietnam. It estimates that overproduction had led to a stockpile of 40 million bags. It has proposed removing poor quality beans from the market to cut excess supply and to bring up prices.

Oxfam is backing that move. It says destruction of five million bags of coffee of 60 kilograms each could bring prices up 20 per cent within a year. Oxfam wants developed countries to pay the 140 million dollars this will cost. The move will bring benefits worth 1.2 billion dollars, it says.

The ICO is holding a meeting in London next week to discuss the price crisis. Oxfam says the meeting can be effective only if it gets enough support from political and business leaders. So far the indifference of the coffee companies has been matched by the complacency of rich country governments, it says.

"How governments and companies react to this crisis is the acid test of whether globalisation can be made to work for poor people," Lovett says. "We were told to be patient and that the free market would eventually work. We're still waiting as the rich get richer and better at making excuses. Enough is enough. Twenty five million people need action now."

The crisis has consequences for the consumer. At the present low prices farmers are letting the quality of the coffee fall, says an ICO spokesman. Some of the coffee now finding its way into the market contains stuff "not recognisable as coffee," he says.

Oxfam aims to bring consumer pressure on the big coffee companies. Its campaign will seek to educate coffee drinkers about the "injustice in the cup" which gives farmers less than production costs while making billions for the coffee multinationals.

Sophia Tichell, senior policy adviser at Oxfam says the fact that the big companies have been ignoring the end of the supply chain "seems remarkably short sighted because there is plenty of evidence that consumers are interested even if companies are not."

TEEN ANARCHIST SUES SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

excerpted from www.courttv.com

"I pledge the grievance to the flag
Of the United State of America
And to the Republicans whom I can't stand
One nation under smog, indespicable
With liberty and justice for some, not all."

When 15-year-old Katie Sierra wore T-shirts bearing this version of the American pledge as well as other sayings that showed her opposition to the war in Afghanistan, teachers and students at her West Virginia High School were outraged.

Some students of Sissonville High School allegedly threatened to give Katie a taste of "West Virginia justice."

Though only 15, Katie Sierra had attended over a dozen schools before arriving at Sissonville High School in the fall of 2001 because she moved around a lot with her mother, Amy. Katie, a good student with no history of behavioral problems, says she heard that the West Virginia High School wasn't as liberal as other schools she was used to, and characterizes the students as bigots.

The school's principal, Forrest Mann, suspended Katie for three days and forbid her to wear the controversial shirts, saying that her behavior was "disrupting school activity." Mann says his job is to guarantee students a safe school and good education—which became impossible in the volatile environment resulting from the controversy. Mann also denied Katie's request to start an anarchy club.

Following her suspension, Katie contacted the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which took up her cause. She filed a suit against the school district and Mann, maintaining it was her First Amendment right to wear what she wanted, express her political views and even start the club.

In a symbolic gesture, the suit, which also asks that the school erase the suspension from a record, asks for only $1 in punitive damages.

The case went to trial in July 2002 before a Kanawha County jury and Judge James Stucky.

The Controversy

On the morning of Oct. 23, 2001, Katie asked Mann if she could start an anarchy club, so that like-minded or curious students could gather, have reading and discussion groups and do community service.

She'd spent all weekend working on a Constitution and Manifesto for the club. "This anarchist club will not tolerate hate or violence," says her Manifesto. "It is our final goal to dispel myths about anarchism, especially the belief that anarchy is chaos and destruction."

Forrest Mann didn't look at her literature before rendering his decision that he would not permit such a club in his school. Katie asked him to read the documents, and though he agreed to read them later he said that he wouldn't change his mind.

According to Katie, she demanded he tell her why, but Mann had to ask her several times to return to class.

Following that meeting, Katie was sitting in third-period English class with a stack of her Anarchy Club flyers sitting on her desk. One or two of the students asked to take a look, and then returned the flyers to Katie.

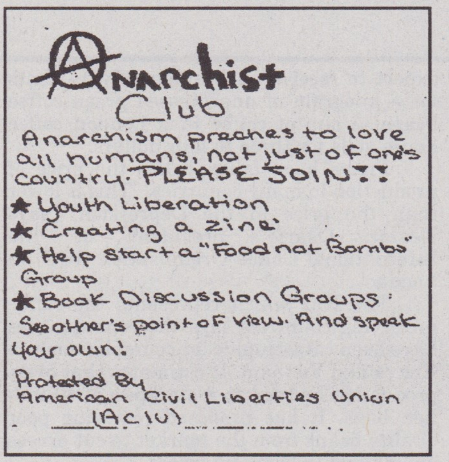
Katie admits she is an anarchist, but says that while anarchism is often associated with a violent overthrow of government, she is a pacifist. She opposes all violence and advocates "a peaceful revolution." After all, she says, anarchism is about freedom, and violence violates the freedom of others.

At some point, Katie began scribbling her

opinions in marker on her T-shirts. She says she'd been wearing her T-shirts long before the day of the terrorist attacks, although she added a few things after the event.

Being a pacifist, she opposed the attacks on Afghanistan. She was also taken aback by the wave of "flag-waving;" students suddenly considering themselves patriots, blindly advocating war without stopping to think. At the same time, says Katie, the students ignored problems right there at home, such as racism and homophobia.

Some of the shirts bore handwritten statements promoting peace or condemning racism. Others were more controversial, such as one with



the phrase, "When I saw the dead and dying children in Afghanistan, I felt a newly recovered sense of national security."

Another showed a picture of an American flag turned up-side-down with an anarchy symbol drawn through it. Other messages mocked "flag-wavers," those who were swept by patriotism following the September 11th attacks.

But Katie adamantly denies being anti-American "If I didn't love this place, why would I want to change it?" she said.

Fellow student Jacob Reed read the back of Katie's T-shirt and allegedly told her, "If you don't like this country, then f—-ing leave."

Reed was sent to the principal's office by the teacher for cursing at Katie and received detention.

Later in the day, Mann called Katie into his office and told her she would no longer be allowed to wear such shirts. Mann also claimed Katie had violated his prior orders by making the flyers available to other students, and placed her on a three-day suspension.

When Katie got home that afternoon, she was angry over Mann's dismissal and went online to contact the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

After a bit of looking around, Katie got in touch with two attorneys doing occasional work with the ACLU of West Virginia. Roger Forman, who at one time was the chairperson of the state ACLU, contacted the school district's attorney. The attorney agreed that Katie should in fact be able to wear her shirts and start her club. At a meeting with Katie, her mother, Forrest Mann, and Roger Forman, the issue was discussed, and things appeared to be settled.

But on Oct. 29, the day Katie returned to school, a Board of Education meeting left the teenager in tears. At the suggestions of a classmate, a member of the student government, Katie attended the meeting so she could address the board about the recent events.

Katie waited almost three hours to speak. Some board members were helpful, suggesting Katie start with a club outside of school and then try again to have the school permit it.

The meeting ended, however, in a harsher tone. "This isn't something funny or cute," said one member. "You're talking about overthrowing the government!" Another yelled that Katie is a traitor, and suggested that what she is doing is "like you stood up and waved a Japanese flag on Pearl Harbor day."

The Verdict

On July 12, 2002, the jury of five women and one man found that Katie Sierra was improperly denied the right to start a club, but was properly suspended and properly denied the right to wear her T-shirts. The jury awarded the nominal damages of $1.

Katie Sierra and her attorneys viewed the verdict as a victory. The jury's decision also allows the attorneys to petition the trial judge for their fees and expenses.

Defense attorney Gary Pullin says that the verdict is not a guarantee that there will be an anarchy club at Sissonville. Katie's request must be reviewed again, but can still be denied, he says.

Katie Sierra was originally denied the right to return to Sissonville High School. However, she was subsequently granted permission to return to the school and plans to return in the fall 2002 for her senior year.

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AMERICA'S CASE FOR WAR IS BUILT ON BLINDNESS, HYPOCRISY AND LIES

George Bush and Donald Rumsfeld are willfully ignoring the realities of the Middle East. The result can only be catastrophic

by Robert Fisk
Published in the *Independent/UK*

Years ago, in a snug underground restaurant in downtown Tehran, drinking duq—an Iranian beverage of mint and yogurt—Saddam Hussein's former head of nuclear research told me what happened when he made a personal appeal for the release of a friend from prison. "I was taken directly from my Baghdad office to the director of state security," he said. "I was thrown down the stairs to an underground cell and then stripped and trussed up on a wheel attached to the ceiling. Then the director came to see me.

"'You will tell us all about your friends—everything,' he said. 'In your field of research, you are an expert, the best. In my field of research, I am the best man.' That's when the whipping and the electrodes began."

All this happened, of course, when Saddam Hussein was still our friend, when we were encouraging him to go on killing Iranians in his 1980-88 war against Tehran, when the US government—under President Bush Sr—was giving Iraq preferential agricultural assistance funding. Not long before, Saddam's pilots had fired a missile into an American warship called the Stark and almost sunk it. Pilot error, claimed Saddam—the American vessel had been mistaken for an Iranian oil tanker—and the US government cheerfully forgave the Iraqi dictator.

Those were the days. But sitting in the United Nations General Assembly last week, watching President Bush Jr tell us with all his Texan passion about the beatings and the whippings and the rapes in Iraq, you would have thought they'd just been discovered. For sheer brazen historical hypocrisy, it would have been difficult to beat that part of the President's speech. Saddam, it appears, turned into a bad guy when he invaded Kuwait in 1990. Before that, he was just a loyal ally of the United States, a "strong man"—as the news agency boys like to call our dictators—rather than a tyrant.

But the real lie in the President's speech—that which has dominated American political discourse since the crimes against humanity on 11 September last year—was the virtual absence of any attempt to explain the real reasons why the United States has found itself under attack.

In his mendacious article in this newspaper last week, President Bush's Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, also attempted to mask this reality. The 11 September assault, he announced, was an attack on people "who believe in freedom, who practice tolerance and who defend the inalienable rights of man." He made, as usual, absolutely no reference to the Middle East, to America's woeful, biased policies in that region, to its ruthless support for Arab dictators who do its bidding—for Saddam Hussein, for example, at a time when the head of Iraqi nuclear research was undergoing his Calvary—nor to America's military presence in the holiest of Muslim lands, nor to its unconditional support for Israel's occupation of Palestinian land in the West Bank and Gaza.

Oddly, a very faint ghost of this reality did creep into the start of the President's UN address last week. It was contained in two sentences whose importance was totally ignored by the American press—and whose true meaning might have been lost on Mr Bush himself, given that he did not write his speech—but it was revealing nonetheless. "Our common security," he said, "is challenged by regional conflicts—ethnic and religious strife that is ancient but not inevitable. In the Middle East, there can be no peace for either side without freedom for both sides." Then he repeated his old line about the need for "an independent and democratic Palestine."

This was perhaps as close as we've got, so far, to an official admission that this whole terrible crisis is about the Middle East. If this is a simple war for civilization against "evil"—the line that Mr Bush was so cruelly peddling again to the survivors of 11 September and the victims' relatives last week—then what are these "regional challenges"? Why did Palestine insinuate its way into the text of President Bush's UN speech? Needless to say, this strange, uncomfortable little truth was of no interest to the New York and Washington media, whose willful refusal to investigate the real political causes of this whole catastrophe has led to a news coverage that is as bizarre as it is schizophrenic.

Before dawn on 11 September last week, I watched six American television channels and saw the twin towers fall to the ground 18 times. The few references to the suicide killers who committed the crime made not a single mention of the fact that they were Arabs. Last week, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* went to agonizing lengths to separate their Middle East coverage from the 11 September commemorations, as if they might be committing some form of sacrilege or be acting in bad taste if they did not. "The challenge for the administration is to offer a coherent and persuasive explanation of how the Iraq danger is connected to the 9/11 attacks" is about as far as *The Washington Post* got in smelling a rat, and that only dropped into the seventh paragraph of an eight-paragraph editorial.

All references to Palestine or illegal Jewish settlements or Israeli occupation of Arab land were simply erased from the public conscience last week. When Hannan Ashrawi, that most humane of Palestinian women, tried to speak at Colorado University on 11 September, Jewish groups organized a massive demonstration against her. US television simply did not acknowledge the Palestinian tragedy. It is a tribute to our own reporting that at least John Pilger's trenchant program—Palestine is Still the Issue—is being shown on ITV tomorrow night, although at the disgracefully late time of 11.05 pm.

But maybe all this no longer matters. When Mr Rumsfeld can claim so outrageously—as he did when asked for proof of Iraq's nuclear potential—that the "absence of evidence doesn't mean the evidence of absence," we might as well end all moral debate. When Mr Rumsfeld refers to the "so-called occupied West Bank," he reveals himself to be a very disreputable man. When he advances the policy of a preemptive "act" of war—as he did in The Independent on Sunday last week—he forgets Israel's "preemptive" 1982 invasion of Lebanon which cost 17,500 Arab lives and 22 years of occupation, and ended in retreat and military defeat for Israel.

Strange things are going on in the Middle East right now. Arab military intelligence reports the shifting of massive US arms shipments around the region—not just to Qatar and Kuwait, but to the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea and the eastern Mediterranean. American and Israeli military planners and intelligence analysts are said to have met twice in Tel Aviv to discuss the potential outcome of the next Middle East war. The destruction of Saddam and the break-up of Saudi Arabia—a likely scenario if Iraq crumbles—have long been two Israeli dreams. As the United States discovered during its fruitful period of neutrality between 1939 and 1941, war primes the pumps of the economy. Is that what is going on today—the preparation of a war to refloat the US economy?

My Israeli colleague Amira Haas once defined to me our job as journalists: "to monitor the centers of power." Never has it been so important for us to do just that. For if we fail, we will become the mouthpiece of power. So a few thoughts for the coming weeks: remember the days when Saddam was America's friend; remember that Arabs committed the crimes against humanity of 11 September last year and that they came from a place called the Middle East, a place of injustice and occupation and torture; remember "Palestine"; remember that, a year ago, no one spoke of Iraq, only of al-Qa'ida and Osama bin Laden. And, I suppose, remember that "evil" is a good crowd-puller but a mighty hard enemy to shoot down with a missile.

NO BORDER/NO NATION CAMP STRASBOURG JULY 19TH-28TH 2002

The No Border/No Nation Camp took place in Strasbourg (France) from the 19th to the 28th of July, 2002 with 2000 participants from various countries and groups. The aim was basically to protest against "Fortress Europe" and deportations, and to set up a camp where people could live without hierarchical structures and with autonomous and self-administrative politics.

From the beginning, the town and police pressure were quite important—the camp was set upon the "Parc du Rhin" (Rhin Park) on the French side of the border with Germany, without official authorization. Strasbourg was chosen mainly because it's one of the capital cities of EU. The S.I.S. (Schengen Information System) is located there (they have files on about 14 million people, mainly illegals and activists) and there's also a retention center for illegals there. The town kindly (!) gave us seven chemical toilets for 2000 people...thanx. The good thing about it is that a lot of people learned how to build dry toilets...

In the very first days, the police made some arrests for stupid reasons in order to increase the pressure. On Monday the 22nd, three people were arrested during a demonstration in support of asylum seekers and accused of the degradation and robbery of two flags (French/European). Immediately a group of demonstrators came out in support in front of the police station with a banner saying "Smash Capitalism." Later the same day, some groups attacked two ACCOR hostels (accused of collaboration with the French government in the deportation of illegals), thrashed the entrance, and painted slogans on walls like "Expulsion = Baston" (Deportation = Fight Back), "ACCOR = Expulseur" (ACCOR = evictor).

The Permanent Festival Against Racist Laws (Festival Permanent contre les lois Racistes) and the M.I.B. (Movement of Immigration and Suburbs) organized several actions in the suburbs to inform the local population about various problems (housing, work discrimination, unexplained deaths in jail, double sentences for foreigners, repression, and social control).

The Publix Theater Caravan drove a bus through town spreading information to the public.

On Tuesday the 23rd, some people set up a theater act dealing with social control and police repression on the Place Kleber in town center with a samba group. The police tried to arrest one guy who was writing a slogan with chalk on a statue and the crowd's answer was immediate—some bikes were thrown at the police (one of them was injured) and the militant was freed. The police shot some tear gas, but the samba group played again and everything calmed down. On the way back to the camp some ads were painted or broken and some security video cameras were smashed.

On Wednesday the 24th, a 700 person demo against detention centers took place in the town center. The police attacked the demo very violently, one bank was smashed, and finally the cops arrested one person. They used flashballs (new rubber bullets guns), seriously injuring two people. They used these guns at a distance of under five meters, which is illegal (it could be fatal). The guy who was arrested, Ahmed, has been accused of violence toward a police officer (the cop got his hand broken by a stick) and has been sentenced to three months in jail (+5 on parole) on the 21st of August. He stayed in jail from this arrest until the trial in isolation cell, supposedly because of his political beliefs against jails, but actually so that he can't spread the riot feeling in the jail.

On Wednesday night, the town mayor asked to the prefect to make an decree which forbade any type of demo organized by No Border people in town until the end of the camp. A group of five people was considered to be an illegal demo...welcome to dictatorship!

After several discussions on Thursday, it was decided to ignore this and various actions took place in several locations on Friday and Saturday in town (samba band, gathering in front of the justice court to support Ahmed, bridge blockades, occupation of tourist boats with banners, demo in Kehl on the German side, demo in the "Braderie," a huge open air market in town)...These actions, even the most peaceful ones, were systematically repressed. Some people were arrested and some of them will face charges (see below for all the charges). A lot of alternative journalists got their film stolen by the police, and even their cameras broken.

On Sunday the 28th, it was decided to organize an "exode" to leave the camp, i.e., make a caravan with all the vehicles and go in town center to ask for the liberation of the prisoners. The police blocked us and after a lot of discussions they agreed to liberate the last two prisoners in the police station. They even drove them back to us!

Talking about the camp on the whole, a lot of good things happened, but there also were some problems...in no particular order: the free price of food resulted in a loss of money for the various kitchens (a support sale of beers with a fixed price was set up because of that), some arguments between some people of the M.I.B. with pro-Israel people, some "pavlovist" reactions against supposed "fascists" or "sexists" occurred, the relationship with the official media didn't really start before the wave of arrests of Wednesday, which was a tactical mistake because the people only saw us as a bunch of violent thugs and the demos themselves were quite dependent on Strasbourg's activists, who had to lead them, talk to the police, and take some risks for everyone...we don't want to forget that they live there and they'll have to face the cops all through the year. Also there was the typical dissension between pacifists and violent demonstrators which lead to some really dangerous group separations.

Apart from that, one of our main victories was that the detention center for illegals has been evacuated—the authorities were afraid of an attack on it during the demo which was supposed to go there to ask for the liberation of the prisoners. A lot of people participated in the everyday meetings and volunteered in the various working groups on the camp (illegal team, medical team, infopoint, welcoming point, Bertha group (security), kitchens, Silicon Valley, child point...), and it was very enthusiastic.

In August, several actions took place around the Ahmed's trial (21st). On Tuesday the 20th, a group of activists made an action with balloons and banners which were sent to the prisoners at the Elsau prison. The banners said "Prison Abolition," "Free Ahmed," "No More Isolation Cells," "Destroy our Walls," "Solidarity," etc...The prisoners were at their "windows" and shouting. A very good moment.

On Wednesday the 21st a press conference was set up in front of the Justice court, under a bridge on the Rhin. The people were dressed as fake terrorists, hanging cardboard weapons to express the criminalization of our movement and asking for the liberation of Ahmed. A lot of different actions happened in various towns in Europe (London, Athens, Clermont-Fd, Barcelona, Berlin, Paris, Strasbourg, Reims, Rennes, Vienna, Dijon...).

On Friday the 23rd around 20 people occupied an annex of the Justice Minister in Strasbourg. The occupation was very peaceful and friendly, the employees were free to leave, etc...but they called the Justice Minister in Paris who asked them to stay in the building to "protect the equipment." Then, the special police (GIPN) attacked the building, arresting three people outside (supporters) and 17 people inside with a lot of violence (one guy was handcuffed and beaten in the toilets). The first three people will face a trial in March for "outrage to a police officer" and "incitement to riot" for one of them. The 17 others were put in jail for "sequestration," which is a charge used generally for terrorists who are taking hostages. They had a trial on Monday the 26th, but it has been annulled because the district attorney made an error—this charge is supposed to be judged in front of a different court, so they will have a new trial later and they are free until then.

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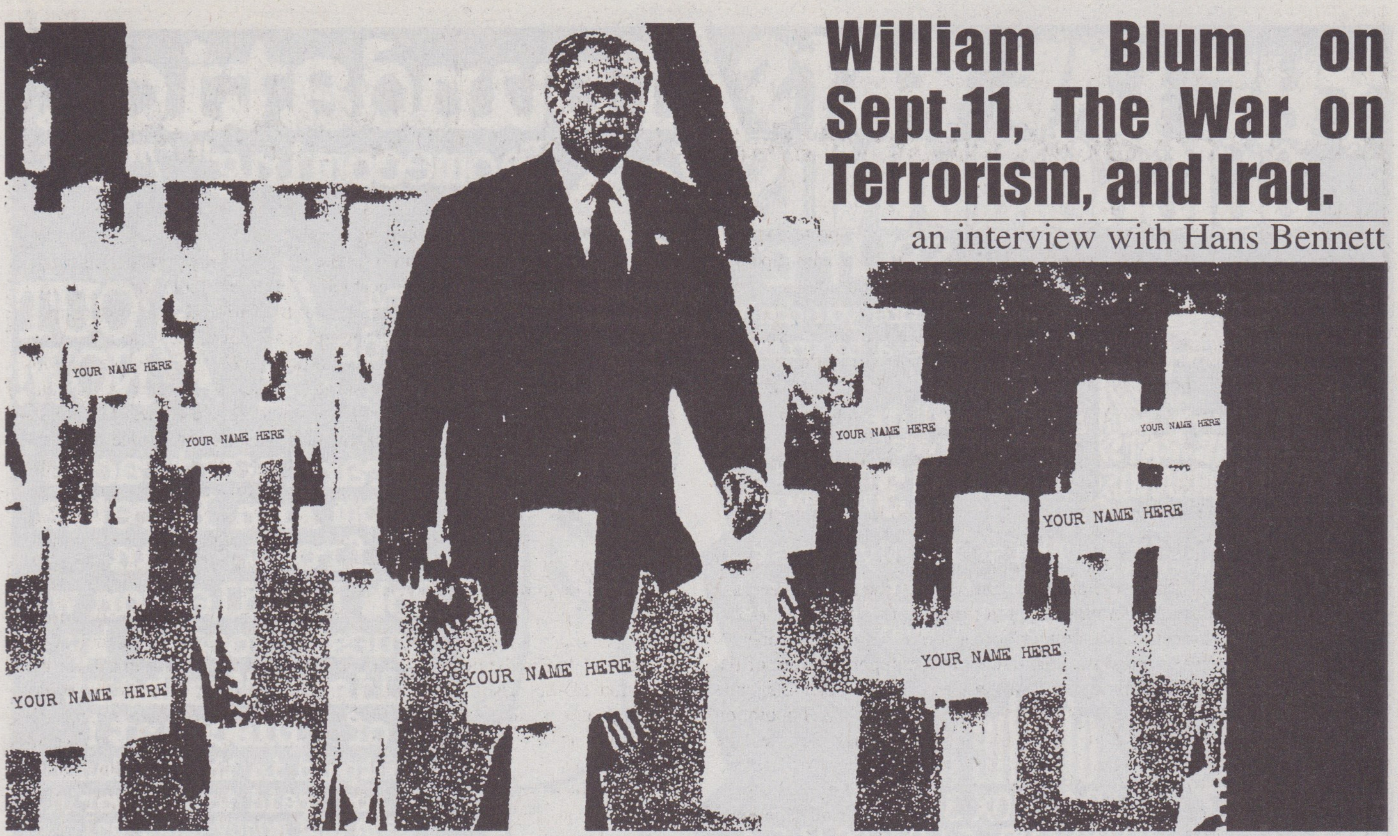
Point on the trials: 1 already judged on the 21st August : 3 months of jail + 5 on parole for violence and outrage on a police officer 1 on the 23rd February 2003 for one guy accused of possession of a weapon of the sixth category (an electric cable in his van) 2 on the 25th February 2003 for one guy accused of graffiti and 2 others accused of degradation and robbery of flags 1 on the 28th February 2003 for two guys accused of degradations 1 on March 2003 for 3 people accused of outrage on a police officer and riot incitement 1 with 17 people for "sequestration."

Silvain/La France Pue

William Blum on Sept.11, The War on Terrorism, and Iraq.

an interview with Hans Bennett



William is a longtime activist and journalist. In the 1960s, he quit his job with the US State Department when his eyes were opened to the horror of the Vietnam War and subsequently US foreign policy in general. He is the author of two books with Common Courage Press: *Rogue State* and *Killing Hope*. His most recent book, *West Bloc Dissident.*, is published with Soft Skull Press. Long-viewed by many progressives as a reliable and overall excellent source for information unmasking US foreign policy, I spoke with Mr. Blum this August, 2002.

Hans: Today many US dissidents are arguing that President Bush and other leaders had foreknowledge of the Sept. 11 attacks, but allowed it to happen anyway. Where do you stand on this issue?

William: I doubt very much whether Bush or his aides knew the exact details (like the plan to use airplanes as missiles). I suspect that the FBI was well aware of several of the hijackers who were studying at flight schools that the FBI and CIA were in touch with. The FBI has admitted that two or three of the hijackers were under surveillance. I'm sure the boarding of these planes by some of these people was not unknown to the authorities. The FBI has had a policy of allowing such plots to go forward so that they can observe them. The longer they proceed, the more details the FBI can learn and the more people they can ensnare in the end.

I think they allowed it to go forward without knowing the full deadliness of the plans. I think if they knew what exactly was planned, they probably would have stepped in sooner. One motivation for allowing a smaller terrorist act is that the powers that be in the US always need enemies to justify their swollen budgets, to enhance their careers, to justify US foreign policy, and to crack down on dissent at home. They need enemies on a continuous basis. They allowed these men to go forward with whatever they had planned in that context. They wanted to, and have in fact used the events of that day in countless ways to advance their agendas (personal and political).

Hans: Looking at how the hijackers were armed with box-cutters, do you think it is really possible for the US intelligence community to stop something like this?

William: They can certainly make it much more difficult for potential hijackers, but in the end the "war on terrorism" cannot be based on such things. The US will have to change its foreign policy. I believe it's US foreign policy that motivates people all over the world to hate US foreign policy and carry out terrorist acts. The terrorists themselves have made it very clear over the years exactly why they're doing what they're doing. They've made all kinds of allusions to the US support of Israel, the US military bases in Saudi Arabia, the continual bombing and sanctions on Iraq, and many other things when they explain their motives. There's no reason to doubt their word in this context. For me, the only way to fight terrorism is to change US foreign policy, not to institute draconian security checks at airports.

Hans: In the past you have argued that the United States does not necessarily want Saddam Hussein out of power. In light of the current preparation for a massive escalation of the bombing of Iraq, do you see any reason to change your position?

William: I cannot pinpoint exactly to what extent the powers that be may have changed their view about him. There were reasons that they did not want him out back in 1991 (even though they won't admit that). It appears that they didn't want him out in 1991 because they didn't know what would replace him. If he was replaced by any kind of democratic government, that would not sit well with their neighbors and US allies like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. If he was replaced by a Kurdish state that would not have sat very well with Turkey. Therefore, US leaders did not want him replaced by any kind of progressive government.

This uncertainty (of who his replacement will be) still remains. It remains to be seen whether or not they will actually take him out of power. I cannot predict every twist and turn of US foreign policy. I don't know if the people that actually plan and carry out the activities could even answer your question.

Hans: In your opinion, what is the biggest lie that the corporate media makes about US foreign policy?

William: It's pushed and accepted by everyone that the US government actually means well with its foreign policy. People assume and believe that in our foreign policy we may make mistakes or blunders that cause more harm than good, or that in certain cases we may be counterproductive. But, people claim to the basic belief that in those policies the US government does mean well.

That's the biggest lie of all. The US could not care less about the welfare of any people around the world. They hardly care about the US people, so why would they care about foreign people? It's not that they want to hurt these people. They are amoral more than immoral. They just don't care. They are out to satisfy the needs of the US Empire and they don't care who gets hurt in the process.

Hans: Is there anything else you would like to add for the interview?

William: When looking at the war waged on Afghanistan, it's remarkable that the US government has now killed, with its bombing, more innocent civilians than died on Sept.11. I think that is the height of irony and it is certainly a war crime, but no US official will ever have to face a court in The Hague or elsewhere for those crimes. That's the way it is.

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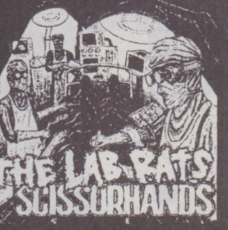

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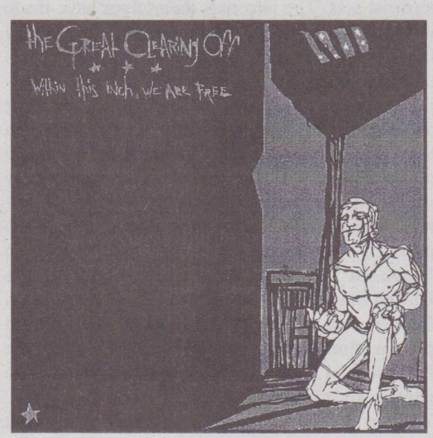

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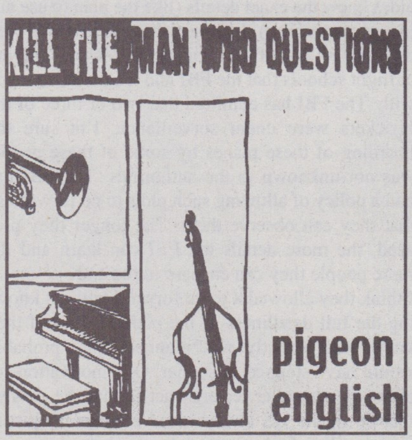

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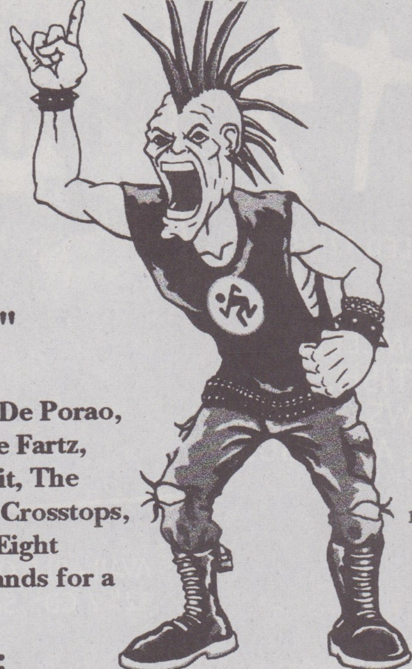

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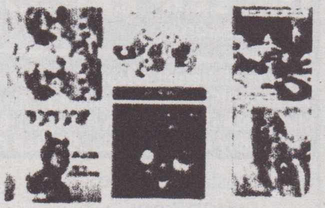
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CHARM CITY SUICIDES

One of the best bands you may have never heard of are the Charm City Suicides out of Baltimore, MD. They put out one of the best records of the last couple years, one of those perfect mixtures of droning alienation and undeniable punk rock energy that sounds completely out of time. They resist categorization because their records are full of actual personality, and not studied posture. A true avant-art-garage punk band.

-RYAN WELLS

MIKE APICHELLA : *vocals & lyrics*
WALKER STUMP-COALE : *bass*
BRENDAN MCLAUGHLIN : *percussion*
BRIAN DUBIN : *guitar*

MRR: OK, First you guys have to tell me why you started the band.

MIKE: The band started so we could musically pay tribute to all the things that make life really awesome. That's pretty much the only reason I ever started any band I've ever been in, but we formed when Walker, our bassist, asked me to start a "60s punk-mod rock" type band up. At the time when we first started I was listening to a lot of that, but I was listening to a lot of other stuff too and I didn't really want to do a retro band, so we both could hardly play any instruments, so we both agreed that no matter what it had to be music that was easy to play and really loud and distorted. So we found some common ground there, and then Josh, who was in a bunch of bands with me prior to CCS, we got him to play guitar, and then Walker got his friend John Browning to come and play drums. John was way into like 70s punk, and his drumming was like so sloppy. He quit pretty soon after he joined, though, so he could join the army, which he really regrets in a major way. Like every time I talk to him he tells me how stupid it was being in the army. After he left we had a whole string of drummers, and none of them just could get quite the right sound we wanted, so now we have Brendan and he's like Baltimore's answer to John Bonham, so it's all good.

MRR: Where did the name Charm City Suicides come from?

MIKE: Well, when John Browning quit the band we felt really bad about it, 'cause he was a really nice, but slightly insane, guy, and he gave us all this musical equipment: a mic stand, a mic, a bass amp, some drum stuff. I have always really hated our band name 'cause it has nothing to do with the music or anything, but I liked John and to sort of be cool to him we just kept the band name that he made up for us. "Charm City Suicides," which was also a song he brought to the band that we pretty much stopped playing after he left. Then we started touring and putting out records and all that, and gaining notoriety, and then we felt really bad 'cause it was like here we were traveling all over America and meeting weird people of all kinds and playing with awesome bands, and John is over in Serbia getting gassed or whatever. We just wanted show that he really left his mark on us, so we just kept the name to honor him as a rad guy.

MRR: What influences the music you guys play? It doesn't quite fit into any neat category like emo or garage. Are you trying to avoid stereotyping?

MIKE: A lot of things. Like I said, first and foremost, it's just the very important experiences of life–good, bad, weird, everything. As far as music goes we listen to everything, any style of music where the artist is totally for real about what he or she is doing.

BRIAN: When we played in Charlotte, NC, the flyer said we sounded like Le Shok and the Locust. Now, I like both of those bands, but we sound *nothing* like the Locust. I think that the Le Shok comparison is flattering and all, but I really don't know where the Locust comparison came from.

MRR: If someone were going to describe your band, how would you prefer it?

MIKE: This is so typical, but I think we have our own style–but whenever people ask me what we sound like, I usually say we're like hardcore punk, or we're rock, or rock'n'roll, just because all three of those terms can be defined in so many different ways by so many different people. Like Brian said, we've been compared to some weird bands,

I mean every band you can imagine within the underground music spectrum almost. I've heard comparisons to the Locust before, and people have called us screamo, people have called us a thrash band, garage, once someone said we were even like a really great noise band!

BRIAN: I view us as a really trashy garage/punk band that breaks things.(laughs) one of my friends said that we were emo and I was like, no fuckin way. We don't fall on the floor crying. That's boring and overdone. If that's your schtick, fine, but I personally am not into that at all.

MIKE: Yeah, I have a hard time believing it when I've seen the crying bands, but at the same time music can really bring about a catharsis and that's to me the only word that can truly describe what happens when play live, that's why stuff might get broken, or we might get hurt, or why we just start doing really crazy things on stage.

BRIAN: I think our live show might be comparable to an xbxrx live show. seriously.

***MRR:* How is the live scene around Baltimore? Are there any local bands you really dig? Do you have a kindred band?**

MIKE: For the first question I can honestly say that Baltimore has one of the best music scenes anywhere, and it is just generally a great environment for people that are artists of any kind to do their thing in. The music scene is especially unusual because unlike a lot of other scenes so much music is accepted by so many different people. Like regularly there are shows where a grind band will play with a folk band and then after that a a guy with a laptop will come up and do a set of freaked out computer music and then there'll be like a performance art piece or something and the audience will be made up of all kinds of people—punks, emo kids, "hipsters," activist kids, everybody in Baltimore just really believes that if somebody is doing something in a majorly passionate way, no matter if it's music, or visual art, or film, or whatever, as long as it's something really meaningful in a lot of ways they'll support it. As for the second question, there are just sooooo many rad bands in Baltimore. As far as I'm concerned almost anybody playing underground music of any kind in Baltimore is cool, but my two favorites at the moment would have to be Fridge A and Entrance. Fridge A is this weird two-piece band that has these brothers Matt and Jared Fischer in it—they're just totally spaced out guys, and their music totally defies categorization, but it's not just weird for weird's sake. You just have to hear them to believe me. Entrance is not a band—it's the solo project from Guy Blakeslee who used to be in the Convocation Of... His stuff is kind of like really heavy and loud and psychedelic—it's like he just has an acoustic guitar and he sings, but it's just as intense as any heavy music you can think of. It's really unique.

BRIAN: Baltimore! There are so many great and amazing bands from Baltimore. I can't list them all but here are just a few; Oxes, Stars Of The Dogon (my old band. seriously, check them out. they rock), Lungfish (r.i.p.), Inure (amazing grindcore), The Convocation Of..., Jon Falk (ex-Daybreak!), T, Love Life, The Miss.....

MIKE: Yeah, The Miss is totally awesome. Damir who used to play drums for Charm City Suicides is in that band. They're really intense. They have a CD coming out soon on Morphius, you should check it out.

BRIAN: ...Universal Order of Armageddon (r.i.p.) and there are tons and tons of other bands that I can't think of right now, but the active bands that I mentioned are seriously amazing. Stars Of The Dogon are going west in May and June. Check 'em out if you see the name. They *will* rock you.

MIKE: And then for the question about a "kindred band," I'd have to say that would be The Convocation Of... We've played with them more than any other local band, both in and out of town, Guy who used to be in that band, is our bassist's cousin, Tonie Joy—their guitarist/singer—put out the vinyl version of our LP, and even their sound is sort of similar to ours—like the guitar parts are really minimal, and the solos are really noisy, their equipment is real trashed, they put on a pretty high energy stage show, and their music has an equal amount of old and new ideas in it as far as how they play their stuff, so yeah, they're really our kindred band if anyone is.

***MRR:* Tell me about the last tour you did.**

MIKE: We do a lot of weekend tours so technically the last tour we did was this past weekend, but the last time we did a full national tour was in summer of 2000 and it was pretty awesome. It was the first tour we ever did that was longer than like two weeks. Some shows fell through, we lost money—I mean it was typical of an unknown DIY band's first tour, but none of us had ever been out away from home for that long for any reason before. That was the coolest thing about it. It was like we were totally using music to both spread a real positive message as well as alter our personal world in a big way. It was just so much fun! We'll never forget it. We are all so stoked to go out this summer. We're doing like about half West Coast shows and half everywhere else except for the East Coast. We have hardly played out on the West Coast so that's something we really want to learn about more, as far as what the scene's like there.

***MRR:* You've had some personnel turnover. Do you think it's changed the band sound?**

MIKE: I think the line up that we have now is easily the best. Mostly because Brendan is just the raddest drummer ever—I mean the reason we've had so many drummers since we started was because I was never satisfied with the way any of them played, I would just tell them like exactly what to play and it's like I do write most of our songs, but still I'd let Josh and Walker play them however they wanted, but I'm just really picky about the drum sound, you know? With Brendan I knew the minute I first saw him in this band called Night Over Calgary (which he's still in) I knew that he was just the awesomest drummer ever. Then he came and practiced with us and I never had to tell him really even once how to play the songs, it's like he just read my mind.

BRIAN: for me, since I'm the newest member, its really hard to live up to how Josh played. I mean, he got so much noise and distortion out of his amp, that I really can't even begin to try and emulate that. I mean, I've knocked my amp over multiple times, so that might help with the noise/distortion.(laughs)
MIKE: I don't know, Brian, you're being a little hard on yourself. I think Brian is just as nuts as Josh as far as his playing goes, but Josh is like one of my best friends in the world so I could never really say Brian is better than him just because of that.
***MRR:* You guys seem pretty lo-tech in approach. There's a lot of bands that do it on purpose, then there's those that are forced into it. Where are you?**
MIKE: Modern technology can be used in really cool ways, but I guess we have yet to find someone with $100,000 worth of recording equipment who can make our band sound good, so we do most of the recording ourselves. We're really picky about how the stuff sounds, like on our album there's like three different engineers cuz there were some songs that we wanted to be somewhat cleaner sounding and some that we wanted to be like just noisy as hell, and then there's one song that we had that was sort of like a cross between those two styles. For every different type of subject matter there's like a different recording style that goes with each.
BRIAN: Although I didn't play on the recording, I think it sounds great. I really really love the trashy, lo-fi quality to it. It gives it character.
***MRR:* What do you guys do to pay the rent? In San Francisco, the days of working part-time so you can be in a band are pretty much over.**
BRIAN: Well, I go to college and I live in the dorms. It sucks, to say the least. Like right now, there are some assholes running up and down my hall like wild invalids. It's a pain in the ass to do work with all of the constant noise going on. A week ago, I was trying to sleep, and the people upstairs were having sex and it *woke me up!*(laughs) The walls here are way too thin. so, to answer the question, I don't pay rent. but I will be soon enough.
MIKE: I work doing landscaping outside of all these office buildings in the suburbs of Baltimore. It sucks. We all really just want to make music and like tour all the time. Along with making the best music that we possibly can, that's what we're working towards ultimately.
***MRR:* You guys have a self-titled 7", you're on a couple of comps, and you got an LP out on Vermin Scum. How did the LP happen? Are you happy with it?**
MIKE: We're very happy about the LP It's really the best thing we've ever done. It came together just basically because we'd all known Tonie Joy for a while and his label, Vermin Scum, put out some really amazing records. He's one of my all time favorite guitarists, we just shared a lot of the same ideals about making music and about staying independent of the mainstream commercial scene, and most of all he just really likes our music a lot, so he decided to put out an LP for us and we said "hell yeah!"
***MRR:* The LP Came out a little while ago but it seems like a pretty tough record to find. What's going on with the distribution?**
MIKE: This is a touchy subject. We don't really want to talk about it too much for a lot of reasons, but the simplest thing I can say about that is this: Vermin Scum unfortunately went out of business right before our record came out as a result of Tonie's association with this manufacturer/distro that was offering him an easier, more pro, but still DIY way of getting the records to the people who wanted them, but it just sort of backfired.
***MRR:* I thought your LP was one of the best records to come out last year, easily. What kind of feedback have you gotten from your local booster society? Locals can be pretty tough.**
MIKE: Actually, because of all the problems with distribution–only 500 were pressed and it's distributed world wide–a lot of people here still haven't heard it, but the few who have, here or anywhere, have all told me they think it's really amazing which is really nice to know.
***MRR:* How about overseas reviews? Anything?**
MIKE: No. None that I know of. I just know it's over there 'cause I've looked around on the web for it before. It's in Japan, France, Germany, Holland, some other places probably.
***MRR:* What are your plans for this year? Are you getting any more records out? Touring? Egotistical side projects?**
MIKE: We are going to be touring from July 5th to about August 8th, and when we come back we'll be working on a new record and some new material too. I'm not sure what label the record will come out on, but it'll probably be another LP, or maybe a split with this awesome hardcore band the Pac Men from Connecticut–they have Brian from the Pist on vocals and they're like really intense, sort of like Minor Threat for the early 21st century. After that probably a bunch of weekend tours, that's all we can do from the fall till spring because Walker and Brian are in college.
BRIAN: What Mike said about touring was what I have to say about touring. As for side projects, I am starting this band called Double Dagger with these two guys who used to be in this local band called League of Death. It should be pretty rad. I'm playing drums. I am also supposed to start a sludgy-metal type band called Bald Eagle with my friend Corey who is in Stars of the Dogon, but who knows when that will happen. It's been on the back burner for months.
MIKE: I've got a side project too. I sing in this improv rock band called Feast of the Epiphany. We've been playing pretty regularly and some people seem to be getting into it. It's way different than Charm City Suicides though, but I like just as much as CCS.
***MRR:* Any last statements?**
MIKE: Thanks for interviewing us, Ryan.
BRIAN: I love you Baby Leg!

CCS DISCOGRAPHY:
Green Blood 7" EP (self-released) Track "Girls in My Neighborhood" on V/A comp 7" (Blood Beat) Track "Go Nowhere" on V/A Supersonic Sounds from the Fuck You Movement CD (CNP Records) self-titled LP (Vermin Scum), self-titled CD (Youth Attack)

THE FEEDERZ

A brief conversation with Frank Discussion by Michael Thorn.

MRR: What in the hell have you been doing in the last ten or fifteen years? The band hasn't done a record since "Teachers in Space" and the last thing we can think of you doing was the PRANKS video put out by Research.

Okay, so I'm a lazy bastard. All I can say is I did various things over the years. For example, I even worked at Microsoft for about 6 years. It served my purposes nicely. Essentially my job was breaking their software. Not only did I learn some interesting new skills, I was able to help them cure little oversights they made. Can you believe they forgot to make their software open source? But that sort of thing is easily fixed. Heh. Let's face it, people are still pissed off. Hell, I'm still pissed off. Nothing has really changed. Except maybe to get worse. So we're back in the fray, take it or leave it.

MRR: How did the Feederz form, what was the motivation, and how did you end up in SF from Phoenix.

When the Feederz started, there was about 10 of us who were the 'punk scene' in Phoenix. We would pick from each other and it was you, you, you and me and let's call ourselves the Stinking Defeated Old Lepers or whatever and we'd play one show and then form another group. The Consumers (the first AZ punk band) and the Exterminators were the only exceptions who existed for any length of time. Clear Bob and I got together on the side to do something different.

Our motivation? Rage. We were so sick of all the garbage we had to swallow and we wanted to play at jamming it down all their throats. And playing music would be a fun way of doing it. Sure as hell beats passing out mimeographed pamphlets outside of work. Hahahaha. But even before we started playing music we had started our assault in other areas. Knowing how the media wouldn't be able to resist, we put out a communique that followed the standard urban guerrilla form and sent them to the TV stations and papers. We *ordered* them to show up at an address at precisely 3:00, for a press conference. The all did as they were told (along with a few plain-clothes cops) and we got to abuse them roundly and got them to print and say things they would have never under any other conditions. So we found out early on we could make them look like the idiots they are AND get our message out at the same time. You can't beat that, now can you?

Probably needless to say, the cops did not enjoy being made fools of while we merrily went about attacking all the things they hold dear. So when I did the Bored With School thing, the cops went after me. So I had to move, so off I went to San Francisco.

MRR: For some of the younger MRR readers, tell us about some of your more notorious pranks. What about working at American Express, the "speckles-gate incident" at Gilman and the essay contest prank.

Hmmmmm... That goes back a ways. Makes me feel like Ozzy. Tottttty! The water monitor has shit the bloody fucking floor again! OK. Now I got that out of my system... At American Express I worked verifying people's bank accounts so they could make their decisions on who got cards and who doesn't. Even though we were the bottom of the pile, we had a lot of power when you think about it. When I got a credit card form from a cop or priest I would just write that their banks didn't have a high enough balance and they would get refused. And when some guy had a negative balance, off a card would go to them. I hope they used them well. In other words, spent the shit out of the cards and then went belly up on them so they never would get their money.

SpecklesGate was where we played Gilman and I was wearing a dead dog and cat. All these politically correct punks got upset. The irony was that animals had been 'put to sleep' by vets and were on their way to a rendering plant when we sidetracked them. But they never bothered to ask where or how we had gotten them, etc. They are so much like Christians. Always ready to jump on being the martyr and whining without thinking. They were even asking Frank Moore who had helped me sing Jesus if we had kidnapped him! They were so hungry for 'victims' to 'defend'. So they whined and a bunch of them even got a hold of the dog's collar and went so far as to call the owner in the middle of the night to tell him they had seen his dog at a punk show. Doing what? Trying to get in on the guest list? Here a whole group of these Care Bear punks didn't have the brains between the lot of them to evven make a phone call without fucking it up. Gilman even called a special meeting over it to vote on whether or not they should add even more rules. Since the name on the dog's collar was 'Speckles' we called it SpecklesGate ever since as a joke.

The Bored With School affair was a memo I wrote that had supposedly been signed by then Superintendent of the School Board, Carolyn Warner. In the

memo we brought up a few things the school system had er... neglected to mention about the nature of school, work, money, etc. and the life they had to look forward too. It's part of a game I like to call "Making The Shame More Shameful By Making It Public". We also made up our own contest based on essays on "Why I like being a student" for a cash prize. I had 5000 of them printed up and got students from all the schools in Phoenix to pass the out to the teachers. They in turn dutifully passed them out to the students, many times after reading them themselves. Which shows that weren't saying anything they didn't already know.

Anways, it caused this huge scandal and it was great because the news on TV was printing out the entire text on the air. Just in case anybody had missed it I guess. Heh. When they said the cops were involved and that they had 'leads', I knew it would take even the cops about 10 seconds to figure out who did it. So I took off for San Francisco. The Phoenix PD even tried to find me in San Francisco after they read an article in MRR about all the fun.

BTW—the Bored With School Paper is at:
http://www.feederz.com/bws.html

MRR: The internet has particularly made taboo subjects/information readily available at the click of button. Does that make a cultural terrorist's job more difficult? Do you think shock-value has any "value" anymore. Why?

Funny I look at it quite the opposite way. There's some great opportunities for sabotage now that were never there before. Now you can take a public or commercial web site and change it for them in much the same way as with the Bored With School paper but in a much bigger way. It's "the sabotage of the new millenium". Heh.

As far as shock goes. It's merely a tactic. You slap a person upside the head with a baseball bat and then say, "now that I have your attention..." Because you can have the most important message in the world, but if you just bore people to death then... Of course, it's even better when the message can be the baseball bat itself.

MRR: How did it came to be that Broken Rekids is reissuing the FEEDERZ catalog.

Well I had kept hearing about copies of the albums being sold for outrageous prices and thought that was ridiculous, sick and wrong. I really didn't want to carry on doing all that business on my own. So I asked around for someone who is good *and* honest. A difficult combo there. Heh. And to make a long story short, Broken Rekids became the one. They had the added advantage of being distributed by Mordam Records. And they're putting out the new one too.

PS - A couple of the new beasties are at:
http://www.feederz.com/BreakItAll.mp3
http://www.feederz.com/0wned.MP3

MRR: Why are the Feederz back together? Why not start something new?

I thought about that, but since it was essentially the same project so to speak, why not keep the name? We knew there were people who would wor.der if it would be just another attempt for a bunch of stinking defeated old lepers to trot out their old shit and make fools of themselves and shame the memory of what really have died gracefully years before. So we decided early on that either we would.either destroy on our own terms now or forget it. And gauging from the number of people singing along to the new songs at our first show, I think we were right.

More info: www.feederz.com

END ON END

Interview by Jacen Beers

End on End is politically charged hardcore from Los Angeles, California. End on End combines a sense of urgency, passion and activism with a heartfelt love of music, and a desire for honesty and integrity in all their actions. Their new record Why Evolve When We Can Go Sideways? marks the second full-length from this LA quintet, and documents the changes that the band has gone through since their debut full-length and split full-length releases on This Guy Records.

MRR: First off, who are each of you and what do you do in the band?
Josh: I wield the mighty four strings of the apocalypse!
Dom: Left wing/drum set.
Tooley: Guitar.
Andy: Vocals.
Phil: Guitar, hair.

MRR: I am going to cause conflict right away by asking you guys the question I always ask, if you could kick one person out of the band, who would it be and why?
Dom: Without a second thought, Tooley, that freaking guy is late all the freaking time. And you know what the back breaker is? I think he does it just to piss me off. I live with the poor guy, so we car-pool a lot. You think he's ready to leave, you get outside, start the car, wait ten minutes, shut off the car, come inside, and the guy is sitting on the couch, watching the freaking Dodgers game. Then, he still has to go upstairs to freshen up before we leave. Drives me up the freaking wall! Tooley, you will suffer one of these days!
Tooley: Actually, I've been planning on kicking everybody out and doing my solo album. I have a feeling that disco is coming back in a big way and these guys aren't too into it. That and the fact that I like to be on time for everything and the rest of the guys aren't very punctual.
Phil: Josh, because we never hear him anyway. It's like he's not even there anyway!
Josh: I'd kick out myself, because it the easiest way to get out of this question!
Andy: Phil, because he has long hair and listens to Stryper! But he listens to Manowar too, so I guess we'll keep him.

MRR: You went on a big West Coast tour recently. What were the most memorable experiences from that?
Phil: Freezing in Missoula, MT, while the local mailman wore short sleeves and Birkenstocks, meeting some truly amazing people, driving through the night while it snowed and you couldn't see the road, only after I woke up and found Dom driving on some side road off the freeway, thinking I had frostbite cause I couldn't feel my feet, the pig head in the middle of the road in Durango.
Josh: We went out with our friends in Life in Pictures. Two of their members couldn't do some shows, so Phil and I filled in for them. We learned their entire set on the six-hour van ride from Las Vegas to Reno.
Andy: Probably playing a show in Logan, Utah in an old storefront with no heat. It was the middle of January and we had to play in our winter coats. I think by the end of the show the room had gotten up to about 45 degrees. We froze our asses off, but the kids at the show still went crazy, that or burying Life in Pictures in the gear-loading race.
Dom: Like always, spending a couple days in Prescott, AZ. Andy has a long time friend that lives out there. And this guy is non-stop rocking at the barbershop, sucking on a pork chop! Matt takes care of us whenever we are out there. Cool little city.

MRR: You guys seem to be doing well for yourselves, getting releases put out there to the kids. You even have a tape released in Malaysia. How does it feel to know that people everywhere are getting into your music?
Phil: You know, it feels quite good; I never thought I would ever see the day that kids on another continent could hear our music. It makes me feel good!
Andy: Yeah, we try to get our stuff out to as many people in as many different places as we can. Getting good distribution for releases is really hard, so we have tried to go the old school route and do a lot of tape trading with kids in Europe and Southeast Asia. We've sent stuff off to Yugoslavia and the Philippines, all over the place. When we do that, all we ask is that the kids we send our music to make as many copies as they can and give them out to all their friends. There is nothing better than getting an email or a letter from someone in the Philippines or Malaysia or wherever who is just totally into our music. It is incredible that we can reach people that far away.

Josh: We work hard to get our name and the music out there. When somebody comes to us about our music, it feels like the hard work pays off.

MRR: This question is for Andy and whoever works with him on his label. What does Coldbringer mean? It confuses me yet intrigues me.

Phil: Hey, wait a minute!

Andy: Phil and I run Coldbringer Recordings together. I think the label was actually Phil's idea, but we had both been thinking about doing something like this for a while. The whole thing started out with an online radio station I do called Coldbringer. From there, Phil, Josh, and I started up the Coldbringer Collective, which is a whole network of different stuff. I coordinate a zine as part of it too. The name (and I'm going to expose myself as being incredibly uncreative here) came from a song by the band Naked Raygun. It isn't even my favorite song by them; I've just always liked the name. For me, the name Coldbringer has a pretty sinister connotation, you know, like the grim reaper "he who brings the cold," which also explains the skeleton logo we use. It's just a cool word.

MRR: Did Tony really leave the band in order to fulfill a lifelong dream to play golf? That seems pretty unbelievable.

Josh: Believe it or not, he did. He traded a guitar for a golf club. I think he likes the smell of cut grass more then a small practice room with four other guys.

Andy: Man, that is ancient history! He's still with us in spirit though. We carry a photo of him with us in our van every time we go out on tour. Kind of like a fairy guitar player to watch over us!

Phil: I don't wish to discuss such matters. I will, however, confirm the fact the Tony still rides with us on tour, in the form of a picture.

Dom: Tony? Tony who? Tony Esposito.

MRR: This is a bit off topic, but I was wondering if there are any creepy strange people in LA that you guys would like to talk about. I live near a store with this creepy guy we have nicknamed Bubbles who collects pizza boxes, eyeglasses and other things. He tells weird stories about how he doesn't like to shower and he eats bread mold. He is wacky. Any similar weirdoes in your proximity that you wish to share the story of?

Tooley: There are no crazy people in Los Angeles.

Phil: There is a guy in Glendale, where I live, that we call Boxman. He always wears a box on his head, quite strange. There's also the guy who wraps his head in saran wrap and runs up the canyon hill. Weird, I don't get it.

Josh: At the retail store I work at, we get a bunch of weirdoes. There is a guy who wears a pink tutu over his duck print long johns and buys the same James Dean postcard all the time. My favorite is Arthur the Bunny Man. He has this really high voice and names people after fruit. We call him the Bunny Man because he carries this stuffed bunny with him at all times. It's his girlfriend, so he tells me. If you give him three dollars, he'll paint a Care Bear of you!

MRR: If you could release a split record with any band, who would it be with, what label would release it, what would the pressing for the record consist of and what would the album art be like? This would be the ultimate End on End release.

Andy: Either Pg.99 or Joshua Fit For Battle, it would be released by Coldbringer Recordings, of course! We'd do a limited edition pressing of ten copies, all on battle-axe shaped vinyl, with a pop-up insert that has a fist that pops up and smacks you right in the face when you open it. That would be rad!

Tooley: Dream release? I would do a split with Tom Jones, him covering a Born Against song, preferably "My Favorite Housing Project."

Phil: I would release a record with Majority Rule or Forstella Ford. Maybe even a three way split. Coldbringer would probably release it. I think it would be on a picture disc with the lyrics as the picture. I would run about 333 copies with 33 being packaged in a see-through, air-tight container with a cell-like device surrounding the record, much like the device used to jail the three evil aliens at the beginning of *Superman 2*. If you don't know what I am talking about, you're either too young or you need to rent the movie; the artwork would be done by Derek Riggs (the guy who did all the Iron Maiden albums). I think that's his name. On a side note, if those bands wouldn't go for it, I would do it with Immortal.

Josh: Capt'n Jack and The Shrimp Shack Shooters on Palm Tree and Gravel Records. It would be pressed on camouflage vinyl wrapped in newsprint.

Dom: Either Randy Newman or Pegboy, I really cannot make up my mind. If we did a split with Randy, it would be on Palm Tree and Gravel Records. I would press a shitload of them, so the crew over at Palm Tree could get stuck with them. If we did a split with Pegboy, it would be on my label, I Eat Palm Trees and Gravel Records. I wouldn't press any. So, if you could find one, it would be worth a mess load of money.

MRR: Finally, this one may be tough to answer. How many times per week do you floss your teeth?

Tooley: Everyday.

Dom: I will say Gretzky, in 1987, with Edmonton.

Phil: Floss?

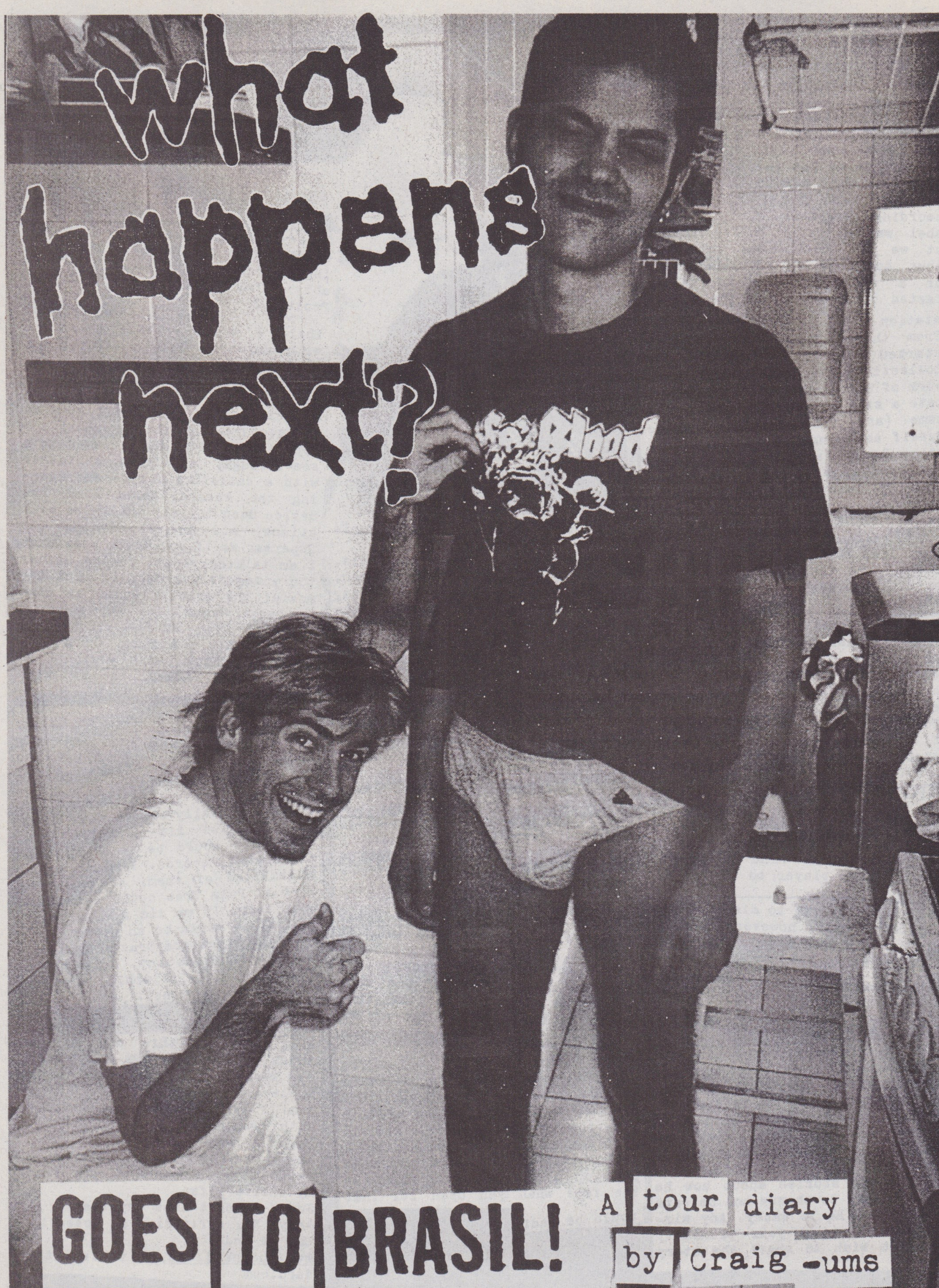
Andy: I think have flossed my teeth maybe a total of ten times my entire life.

Josh: I don't have any teeth!

Andy: No, seriously, he doesn't.

End On End

www.endonend.com, www.substandard.com


what happens next?
GOES TO BRASIL!
A tour diary
by Craig -ums

Day 0: Please wake me for meals.

Devon was more prepared than ever for this trip. In the past we've left for three-month adventures where he only had pocket change, disposable socks, and a toothbrush. But this time he had $30, *and* socks, *and* a toothbrush, *and* an idea of which songs we were gonna play. Of course, I wasn't aware of his preparedness until it was almost too late. My mom and I sat in front of his house for thirty minutes wondering where he was. I contemplated a **WHN?** tour without him; realistically, he is the most disposable member of the live unit—and really, I had more chance of returning home in one piece if he didn't make it. If I were to count all the injuries I've incurred in the past ten years at least half of them could be directly linked to Devon.

We were ten minutes from leaving without him when he showed up, not sure if he was early or if I was late. To make matters worse we were both wearing the same **Flash Gordon** baseball cap and Dr Scholl's insoles. To prevent further embarrassment, Devon and I vowed to confirm and reconfirm all scheduled pick-ups and wardrobes before another episode like this happened again.

Speaking of confirming and reconfirming, there was a meal scare once we got on the plane: we confirmed everybody's veggie meals no less than three times in the days preceding our flight but Max was the only passenger who received a special meal tray. We were about to start gnawing on the seat-backs like turnbuckles when slowly, one by one, our meals arrived. You may think it sounds trivial and spoiled of us, but twelve hours with no food—after paying $650 to someone who then forgets to add your name to a list—can really break a spirit. But finally, food was delivered, consumed, digested, evacuated and eventually frozen and dropped somewhere over Central America.

Day 1: Eu como minha propia merda.

An essential aspect of international underground touring is sneaking into a country with guitars and drums and merchandise without Customs knowing you are a band, thereby avoiding countless taxes and fees and forms and questions. To minimize the possibility of getting "found out," Max brought no drums, and Robert and I only brought our guitars. Mozine, our Brasillian liaison, pressed CDs and shirts through his label Laja Records. And finally, we sent all of our other merchandise (from Max's label, from our other bands, etc) through snail-mail. The whole method can be expensive but rewarding. For example, if Customs took an interest in five scumbags arriving together at their airport and decided to search their bags, it would be helpful if those five scumbags had the foresight not to carry any contraband on their person.

Or the whole process could prove totally worthless if, say, the Brasil Customs officers were on strike and neither the Customs department at the airport nor the Customs department at the post office was operating. In fact, the Customs department at the São Paulo international airport was not open. We walked off the plane, grabbed our luggage and strolled outside without a glance from anyone. Sadly, this meant that the merch we had spent so much time and money to send over will now sit in some Customs office postal holding zone until they return from their strike; and the kids of Brasil will not have their 625 releases to show them the path to thrash righteousness. (In a splash of irony, Devon, who never got around to sending his stuff before we left, carried all his merch with him and thus made it into Brasil fully stocked.)

We were met at the airport by the guys from **Mukeka de Rato** and **Discarga** and led to our van, which was manned by two well-tanned older men, both sporting Polo shirts and golf shorts—your typical **WHN?** fans. They were introduced as Cleber and Amigo but were quickly re-dubbed Motorista and Co-Pilot.

São Paulo is one of the most over-populated and polluted cities in the world. Even cooler, according to the *World's Most Dangerous Places* guide, São Paulo is a "premiere" destination. Not bad for a city in a country not currently at war with anyone but itself. In March of 1998 there were 10,700 cars stolen and 771 murders in the city. And though 90% of violent crimes are committed by and against minors, São Paulo's cops are statistically the least law-abiding members of society.

So I wasn't too disappointed to be heading directly out of São Paulo and north to a small beach town on the outskirts of Santos. On the way there we got to know a little more about our new friends—namely that they were bent on hearing **Guitar Wolf** over and over until we reached our destination some two hours away.

We made a pit-stop at a one-stop gas station/mini-mart/Blockbuster video where all the employees looked and dressed like J-Lo. As each of us waited in line for el baño we gringos took the time to learn some essential Portuguese from Breck and Paulisto of **MDR**. The first being "sorry" (*desculpa*), followed by "thank you" (*obrigado*), and finally "I eat my own crap" (*Eu como minha propria merda*).

Everybody crashed after eating the Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP) and pasta dinner at Xandro's parents' weekend pad located two blocks from the beach. The locals sedated themselves further with beer, cheap wine, and bricks of marijuana while **WHN?**—squares that we are—fell asleep.

Day 2: Headbangs, Cumstains, and Clogged Shower Drains (aka Devon's 33rd Birthday)

More lounging and in the case of the locals, getting loaded. Motorista is a friend of Mozine's and Co-Pilot was along for the free booze and buds. The two spent most of the day laying poolside in their banana hammocks, taking an occasional break back at the pad to get baked to the soothing sounds of **Guitar Wolf** on Volume 10. All of the napping has really confused my body and instead of getting a sick stomach or headache, I just keep getting morning wood. If I didn't know any better we'd already be a week into the trip.

We found a pair of shorts for he-who-hasn't-owned-a-pair-since-he-moved-to-California-in-1995, Robert, ("It's fucking hot here, gimme a break!" he says, as if we wouldn't recognize him in shorts). I then wandered off on my own because of all the attention Robert and Karoline attracted. Hearing "Hey, Osama," and "Woohoo, Blondie!" every thirty steps grew unnerving.

We ate more pasta with TVP, but I eased off the TVP this time on account of getting such un-comic gas from last night's batch. TVP = GAS. Even I was getting annoyed at myself. After one particularly explosive session Max declared, "The King is back!" making reference to his dethroning me last summer. I still claim that he is King and that I am merely the Fart Prince of Foul Air. As far as everyone else is concerned we're both losers and should probably see a doctor.

We ran out of bottled water halfway through the day, meaning we gringos couldn't brush our teeth without fear of getting cholera or diphtheria from dirty faucet water. I opted for some old fashioned gum-assisted plaque-removal while our hosts tried getting us to brush using their wine.

On the ride to our first show in the town of Santos, Motorista and Co-Pilot defied death by removing the **Guitar Wolf** CD and putting in a dirty little Latin dance number called *Toque Toque Meu Bem* (Touch Touch Me Baby). It was an instant hit and, much like **Guitar Wolf**, garnered many requests. On second thought, maybe "request" doesn't quite capture the zest; "mob chanting" is probably more accurate.

We arrived at Santos' Praia Sports Bar in time to hear **Infect** sound-checking. While their guitar player and drummer were belting out a slew of heavy metal classics, I was reminded of a simple rock riffs' ability to transcend cultural boundaries and urge even the stiffest neck to flex waywardly to and fro. Their actual set was no less impressive despite the bass player assuming the singer's responsibilities since the show started later than expected and the singer begrudgingly left early to go back to work—in São Paulo, two hours away. They were fast and tight and made good use of two guitars.

The crowd was quite diverse for a bar: lots of kids with spiky, colored hair danced with big smiles on their faces while the post-high school/pre-real life gang yelled and clapped between songs. And while many of the elders were getting their drink on near the bar, everybody seemed to be somehow entertained, involved, and in good spirits which, like, created a really solid vibe, man.

Devon's and my trip here with **All You Can Eat** in 1995 made us a lot of friends, many of whom showed up tonight—giving us the feeling that the scene drop-out rate here is considerably less than what we're used to. Names came back slowly but faces were instantaneous. No one seemed to age much physically; impressive considering the intense sun and constant threat of **Guitar Wolf**.

Discarga blew the roof off. Da pit pulsed and surged, the music was fast and solid and the drummer looked to weigh about 100 pounds (minus the piercings), and very high on speed. They were gonna be a tough act to follow. **WHN?** played next and all I remember is the drum set coming apart while we played and me feeding it, piecemeal, to people in the balcony. I don't think people danced very much—in fact, I seem to remember a lot of them staring and maybe even gawking. Be that as it may, we had a great time and were eager to finish up so we could watch **MDR** finish the show.

Apparently we weren't the only ones. The place was suddenly packed solid and as soon as **MDR** played the energy in the room didn't let down until they finished an hour later.

I caught up with a handful of old friends, many of who now have successful bands or labels (or at the very least, reputations). It is always inspirational to find people your age still carrying an active interest or participation in this environment. I walked up to Devon and recognized one of the two minimally-dressed ladies to which he was talking. She recognized me too and we were having a lively conversation until she said, "...and then you gave me a peach and tried to kiss me!" I instinctively blurted out "No!" like I did when I was ten and grandpa told me I had a crush on the neighbor girl. That's when we both realized she was thinking I was somebody else. I may not remember which of my keys opens the front door and which opens the mail box but I do remember all 0 times in my life I've tried to kiss a Brasillian woman while in Brasil.

After the show we drove up to São Paulo but not before a group of gussied-up male street-walkers requested that Devon "suck [their] dick[s]!" (Why is it that no matter where we are in the world, Devon always attracts the transsexuals?) The ride went smoothly and except for some

sleepy conversation, the only thing notable was Nino and his relentless energy. The bone-thin, five-feet-tall drummer for **Discarga** spent most of the trip screaming "*Paulisto!*" each time Paulisto was about to fall asleep. (Or maybe it was more of a screech than a scream; in any event, it was still very vexing.) Nino is extremely dark-skinned and has huge white eyes and teeth (which are actually dentures), so inside the dark van he looks like this floating set of eyes and teeth sent from hell just to keep you awake and irritated. Naturally, I found his behavior to be very entertaining.

In stark contrast to Nino's persona were his bandmates'. If Daniel weren't the singer/guitar player for such an aggressive punk band I would have thought he was mute. He looks about sixteen years old and comes across so shy and vulnerable that you're just certain he's plotting the best way to end the world. And the bass player (whose name sounds like Junior and has thus become known as Junior) is also reserved but more social. He's vegan which, in the country that inadvertently made me go vegetarian by inundating me with so much meat, is a welcome trait. Robert and Karoline have adopted him—which is just a nice way of saying they kidnapped him. Now any time we go into a food store they pester him about every single item/ingredient.

The neon Hotel Pax sign clearly illuminated all the prostitutes standing near it. We pulled up at 5am, conveniently also the earliest possible check-in time. Max and Devon beat me to our room and when I walked in they were giggling like ones do when they're tired and something has finally pushed them over the edge. Not only had Devon already backed up the toilet but there was no hot water (Devon flooded the bathroom figuring that out), the walls were crumbling, our TV (almost) received one station (no sound), and our large bay-sized curtains opened up to a ridiculously small corrugated vent just wide enough to allow the noise and filth from the street to waft in. But the real *coup de grace* was the almost abstract artistry of the stains on my bed, all bearing a creamy yellow hue. I hadn't showered since we left the States some seventy sweaty, mucky hours ago, so I figured *What's another few hours spent on a dirty mattress?* and passed out on top of my sleeping bag while the sun came up.

Day 3: Banana Pizza: Don't Knock It "Til You've Tried It

A solid four hours of sleep and I was ready to make sure everybody else was up. Our room was at street level and at times we couldn't even hear ourselves talk over the passing trucks and buses and rice rockets and jetliners outside our "window." We got dressed and hid our stuff under the beds and then went up a couple floors to Robert and Karoline's room. They didn't answer and so we figured they were already out on the town, but as we were stepping away from the door, a half-dressed, half-mast Robert let us in.

We were shocked at what we saw: hot water, satellite TV, classy well-kept décor—and it was almost kind of quiet! No wonder they were having some (interrupted) morning nookie. *(Our room really wasn't THAT much nicer than theirs, which wasn't really all THAT bad anyhow...and I should mention that it was our Brasilian hosts who insisted flatly that the couple must have private quarters. No matter how much we protested our hosts claimed that we married folks needed our own room, then they winked at me as Karoline turned her back.--Robert.) (Hey, at least the cumstains you slept on were your own! - Craigums)*

Our first order of business was some agua. Lots of it. We found some at the end of our block, a block lined with *barracharias*. We assumed they were bars (*borracho* en Español = *drunk*) but it turned out they were tire stores—which explained the incessant revving of car and motorcycle engines that woke us up so early this morning.

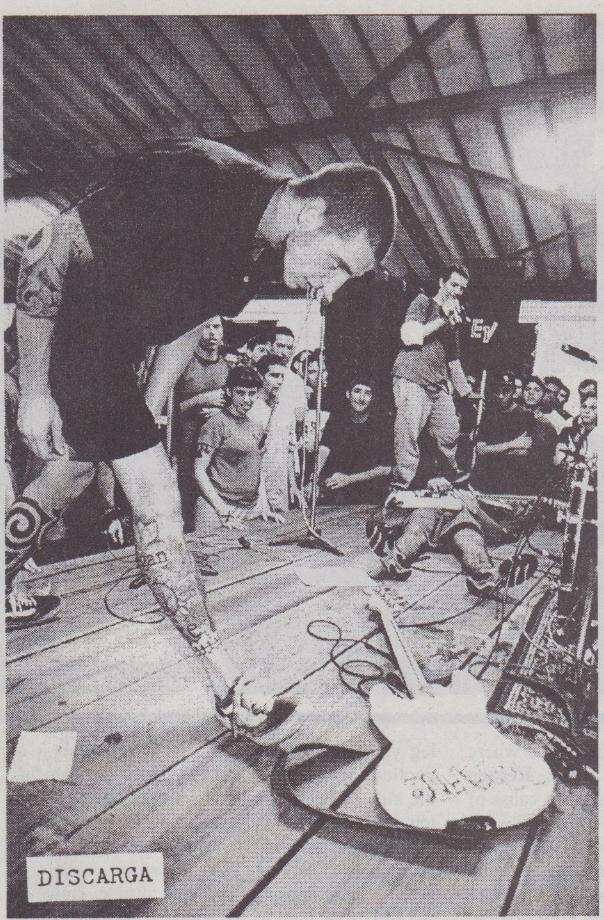
Fully hydrated, we went out in search of some food and found it in a food court. Our restaurant was a cross between McDonald's and Hot Dog on a Stick: bright primary colors, a sterile environment, and greasy food. We ordered a variety of something called a pastel; it's a flaky, greasy "pocket" comprised of potato and vegetables, or chocolate and bananas, or my favorite: apples and cinnamon. We ate seconds.

Next stop was a heavy-metal mall. Every store was a skate shop, a record store or some amalgamation of the two. Every kid looked like a Hot Topic model but it was nice to see a central place for them to go and check out records and hang out looking like freaks, and to find out about any punk or metal show in the area without the fear of getting spit on by meatheads or followed by cops.

A good chunk of all the mall merchandise was bootlegged. There were the traditional record and movie bootlegs, but it didn't end there. We found a line of shoes called Mad Rats which reproduced every style of Vans' shoes for a third of the price. We also found knock-off restaurant chains, electronics, and even cars—all made to look exactly like the original until you looked closely at the brand name.

Come nightfall we made our way towards Hangar 10 for our show with **Sick Terror**, **Life Is A Lie**, and **MDR**. The stage was, as Harlen Coben would put it, tall enough to ride an adult ride at Six Flags. This raised our suspicions about playing a bona fide rock club—an arena we don't generally fare so well in. But with a half-pipe against one wall, a snack bar selling vegan goodies and a Dutch sound guy who knew what was up (and spoke English), we felt more at ease. A name like **Sick Terror** had me expecting either girthy

"Livin' IT up!" @ HOTEL PAX



DISCARGA

MUKEKA DI RATO

VilA vElha , Brasil

dudes with neck-tattoos or stinky dreadlocked patch-punks. I was not at all prepared for four happy, skinny guys—one of which looked like a sixteen year old bull-dyke. Onstage they played, then talked, then played, then talked—and so on, but my Portuguese was still limited to apologies and bad words so I could only assume they were discussing relevant social topics since their songs had titles like *Aborto Legal* and *Minha Musica Politicamente Correta*. Backstage they were incredibly sweet guys, leading me to wonder how they came up with the name **Sick Terror**.

LIAL took to the stage with a greater intent to rock. They were very young and energetic and had two singers that both ran amok to the band's mosh-able hardcore. I'm not big on reverb, especially on distorted guitars, so I got a little twitch when I'd notice it during their set. Then, as we were setting up to play, I realized the reverb was mandatory. There was a setting on the amp cranked all the way up and the only way to disengage it was to have a pedal, which we didn't have. The amp, by the way, was also a knock-off. It was the same size, shape and color of a typical Marshall combo amp—it even looked like it said Marshall across the front in that highly recognizable font—but it was not. Marshall combo amp with reverb or not, we had a great time (and were again overshadowed and forgotten once **MDR** started).

Last time I was in São Paulo my friend Cesar ordered us a pizza that has since reshaped my pizza-enjoying criteria. The secret ingredient? Bananas. Cesar now (legitimately) re-releases records from bands like **Samiam** and **Refused** through his label, Highlight Records. And if that weren't cool enough, he also surprised me tonight with a full pizza, *com plantanos*. He invited us to a party at his house and I assured him at least some of our gang would be there. But of course tonight was the one night everybody wanted to hurry back and sleep in their soiled beds.

Back at the hotel room I was washing up when someone came to our door and offered me a ride to Cesar's party. She told me to meet her in the lobby, but in the sixty seconds it took me to dry off and get downstairs she had already gone. I ran up and down the block trying to catch her but instead caught some stares and offers for hand-jobs from the callused hands of our hotel's lady gargoyles. I walked back to the hotel just in time to see her and some of her friends filing out of the elevator. I don't know what "lobby" means in Portuguese but they apparently thought it meant Room 62. Regardless, I had found my gang and I was ready to party.

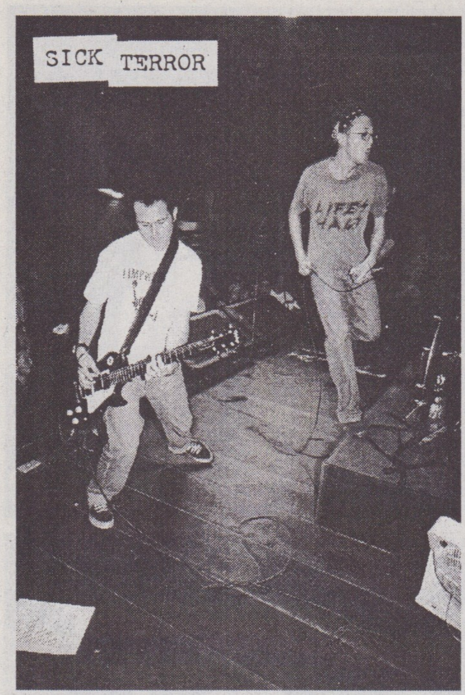
Cesar's house looked like a comfortable place for people to drink themselves sick, which is exactly what many had been doing before I got there. I stepped over the bodies and sat down with Cesar and Nekro (aka Boom Boom Kid—who had flown out from Buenos Aires to hang out with us). The conversation quickly turned to music and before long Nekro led us to his pile of recent acquisitions in Cesar's bedroom. I swear that little man is a walking jukebox. We were talking about band after band, and for nearly every one mentioned Nekro pulled out some relative record he had either brought with him or just picked up. We must have spun records for three hours. At one point the power went out and Nekro resorted to singing/humming/snapping/knee-tapping the records himself. When the lights came back on we went back into the living room to find everyone stoned out of their minds off some sort of pudding.

More motivated than wasted, my escorts decided it was time to hit the town. I said my goodbyes and headed downstairs where nothing seemed to happen. In my remedial Portuguese mind I could only tell that we were sitting on the street because nobody had any idea what else we were supposed to be doing. Every so often someone would start laughing and then everyone would laugh and then it went silent. I remained silent the whole time, probably because I didn't have pudding sledging through my veins.

Ten minutes went by and a cab pulled up. Half the group got in and said they were heading to a Goth club and that we should follow. We all waved *No Problemo* as the cab sped away and then agreed that none of us wanted to go to a Goth club. In fact, none of us wanted to go anywhere other than to sleep. We walked to the nearest subway station and waited till 5:30am for the first morning train to whisk us away to the seedy underbelly of São Paulo that was my hotel room. The ride and subsequent thirty minute walk from the station through some sketchy neighborhoods and back to the hotel was made to pass quickly in the company of a Japanese/Amazonian/Portuguese English teacher who bought me French fries. The sun was coming up and the street noise was leaking into our room so heavily that I snuck into bed without anyone noticing.

Day 4: "Fuck My Ass!" the group of girls in the front row kept chanting.

I forced myself out of bed at 9:30am so's I could catch the free breakfast buffet downstairs and still have time to find some bottled water to brush my teeth with. Soon after, we all piled into the van for a much-too-long ride to The Matrix in Belo Horizante. Our trek included no less than twenty repeat plays of both *Toque Toque* and **Guitar Wolf**. By the time one was finished the gang would cheer in a chorus of *hoorays* and *oles* followed by a rousing *AAAAAAaaaaaay!* as soon as the song would begin again.



"Singa da song!" Breck **de Rato** would yell, and so ensued another gang-chorus of the song.

I'm learning that just about anything here in Brasil can become a chorus. Anyone who watches Latin futball knows the chorus I'm talking about: it is the same monotone pitch that crowds thunder whether there is a foul, a fight or a gooooaaaaal. It's in the same note as a car's engine just after passing into the red, and the yelling carries with it the same intensity and passion. But it doesn't take sports or music to bring on a deafening choral chant. For example:

"Does anyone else have to go to the bathroom?"

"Me."

"I Do!"

"Me, too!"

"*AAAAAAaaaaaay!*"

The trip passed slowly and hotly. No particularly exciting scenery and no particularly diverse music selection. In fact, there was two choices of music (take a guess…), and we hit a lot of stop signs giving us the false impression of having arrived somewhere but ultimately just slowing us down. Nino was in full-force though, obviously charged by the oppressive heat. He acted like he didn't understand English but he seemed to understand Karoline pretty well when she closed her eyes and screamed, "Shut the fuck up!"

About the time it turned dark a collective hunger surfaced. We were told "a few minutes more" every few minutes for the better part of two hours. Our first stop was supposed to be someone's house where a supposed feast awaited us, along with directions to the venue. Directions to the guy's house would have been more helpful.

When we finally did reach the house Mozine ran inside and then ran back out saying, "Guys, we are fucking late for the show," putting emphasis on the "fucking" rather than the "late."

Fifteen hungry people grumbled foodlessly all the way to the club. On the way, **Discarga** reminisced about the last time they played The Matrix. As they told it, a gaggle of drunk punks fought to get in free, citing the door price was too high (too high, of course, after they spent all their money on beer). They were repeatedly denied entry and grew more restless as the night wore on. Fearing a riot, the club let them all inside where they took to patronizing **Point of No Return** (Junior's other band) for the noblest punk cause of all: not having the right patches. A riot broke out anyway and guitars were broke, bottles flew, and **Point of No Return** shut their mouths and called it a night. The closing comment agreed to by every non-gringo in the van was that the kids in Belo Horizante were crazy.

As luck would have it, they were right. We pulled up to a sea of teenagers making out, throwing beer bottles, pissing in the streets, fighting, and giving off an aura that Devon simply described as "feral." We grabbed our gear and headed inside, expecting to be descended upon like gazelles at a lions' party.

In the Matrix's backstage area we found copious amounts of yummy, starchy, filling foods courtesy of the guys from **Contrataque** (not to be confused with **Kontraattaque** or **Counterattack**). It was so good that Devon and I ate ourselves into a state of toilet emergency. A new friend ushered us past the doorless, TP-less puke receptacle that the club passed off as a baño and down the street to a crowded pork smorgasbord which was armed for such emergencies. On the way we walked passed some transsexuals whom our toilet tour guide depreciatively referred to as "Trekos." In one of those priceless and poignant Crocodile Dundee-style, taming-of-the-beast Acts of Devon, the kid suddenly had a new perspective on Trekos. They were just another subversive counterculture waging an assault on the dreaded status-quo, not unlike us punk-rockers with our spiky hair and vegetarian diets and DIY records and gosh-awful tattoos.

Speaking of DIY, I have a soft spot for bootlegs. I enjoy fans making copies of music for other fans and I love acquiring live (unauthorized) tapes of my favorite bands. A lot of the music we acquired as young punk-rockers was from dubbed tapes passed on from who-knows-where. Nowadays we send CDs out to people in other countries with the sole purpose of copies being made for their friends who will make copies for their friends who will make copies, and so on…

Similarly, it's pretty awesome to travel halfway around the world and find kids making their own t-shirts of your band. It's very flattering to think that someone values you enough to bootleg you. (Unless, of course, they're selling your bootlegs at the table next to you for cheaper, like the kids of Belo Horizante were doing.) In almost ten years, Devon and I have only once returned home from overseas with more money than we spent before leaving. This "loss" of money is a given and an expected fact and fortune. However, we still work hard to try and at least recoup *some* of our expenses, if only to be able to eat the next day.

So I say to any bootleggers out there: bootleg responsibly and respectfully—and please hold off on your bootlegging until after we've left town.

Contrataque were obviously the local favorites and the shared energy of the band and the crowd was fun to be a part of. Except when some drunken kid managed to start a fight involving the bouncers, the sound guys, and just about everyone else hanging out in the side stage area. The tension lingered for a while but when **Discarga** played, rather than start a riot, the kids started dancing and having fun again. It was reassuring for us and we were poised to get our set rolling.

We set up behind what we wrongfully figured was just a pretentious stage curtain. Its true function, however, was to shield us from the wild animals snarling and drooling and hurling solid objects and passing out drunk on the other side.

Our first rule when faced with a rabid, potentially dangerous audience is to beat them at their own game. As out of control as they act, we let loose ten-fold. If they make noise, we make more noise. If they spit on us, we spit on ourselves. If they look like they're gonna beat us up, we beat ourselves up. And that's what we did until we felt they understood what we were capable of. Unfortunately for me this meant I got a couple of swift kicks to the face and chest from Devon that left some marks. But the point was made.

I took a chance in between songs to step to the mic for a little broken Portuguese.

"Hola," I said like a true gringo.

"HOLAAAAAAAAAAA!!!" they shot back like true Brasillians, again reminding me of a car's engine idling in the red.

"Todos," I continued, and pointed to all five-hundred-something of them, "Mis amigos, si?"

"AAAAAaaaaaaaaay!" they shouted back with their sweaty fists in the air.

Then I grabbed the (humongous) bouncer next to me—who had been taking endless beatings since we started—and dabbled in English, Portuguese, and Spanish: "Tonight…mi amigo…e tu amigo, comprende?" I motioned again to everybody—the bouncers, the bands, the audience, "Tonight, todos amigos."

Another deafening chorus erupted and, like, the energy in the room went up another couple of notches, man.

From that point on the audience drew little distinction between the stage and the floor: a constant wave of stage-divers and guest singers washed across the stage. One kid (who couldn't have weighed more than ninety pounds) never left the stage. He jumped up, danced for a while, and each time he tried jumping back into the crowd they effortlessly spit him back onto the stage. Devon, Robert and I took a few opportunities to throw him back but he just wouldn't go. At one point he staggered headlong into my guitar from all the way across the stage so I reached around him and played with him trapped between me and my guitar. He looked to Devon for help who happily obliged by freeing him, picking him up over his head, twirling him around and finally body-dropping the kid across his bent knee.

The crowd was pretty out of hand by that point and they only seemed to be getting worse.

"Fuck my ass!" the group of girls in the front row kept chanting. After one of our songs, one of the girls took the music-free minute to repeat, in a standard 2/2 time signature, "FUCK ME FUCK ME FUCK ME FUCK ME…"

As all Brasillians appear to be up for a good chant, her friends joined in enthusiastically. We gringos marveled at their command of the English language, not sure if we should acknowledge them or ignore them and hope they went away. Before we had a chance to do either, the lead girl informed us that we had a phone call. Continuing the tradition, the rest of the girls started chanting, "There's someone on the phone for you." We asked who it was but the conventional call-and-response was no longer in effect.

The mob had taken over.

The lead girl calmed her friends down long enough to unleash what was going to be the mother of all chants…

"The book is on the table!"

Thoroughly confused, we watched as hundreds of kids began chanting, "The book is on the table! The Book Is On The Table! THE BOOK IS ON THE TABLE!"

Our next song was announced as *The Book Is on the Table* and it was an instant hit. And since everyone knew the words they all sang along (or resigned to punching their neighbor in the face).

It was later pointed out that "the book is on the table" is the first thing every Brasillian learns in third grade English class.

Zodiac Mindwarp once said that groupies "gravitate in a lead singerly direction," but when our lead singer usually vanishes into his hoodie, dry shorts and glasses before the amps are even turned off, that theory becomes irrelevant. Throw in a bass player who is married to the roadie, a drummer inexplicably able to put out a "don't even bother" vibe before attention is even focused on him, and you are left with me: the guy who doesn't try, doesn't *not* try, and doesn't know what to do in either event.

That said, I should also point out that this band (or any other band any of us have ever been in) isn't exactly a groupie magnet, nor are any of us groupie-ee types. But then, Belo Horizante isn't exactly your average town, nor is it very rife with predictable characters. That's not a dis, mind you, merely an observation based on personal experience. [**All You Can Eat** played here in 1995 and we thought we were gonna get torn to shreds when the crowd rushed the stage in manner similar to what happened to **Point of No Return**. Only, instead of ripping into our flesh and tearing at our entrails, they were just coming to unearth Myron's skateboard which they held high above their heads in awed reverence. When we started playing again the venue turned into a skate park. Then a guy stole all my guitar picks and someone else grabbed some of our clothes lying behind the amps, and they said they wouldn't give them back unless we played a **Beatles** cover—a request that launched another chant ("**Bea-tles! Bea-tles! Bea-tles!**")]

Anyway, a tall, slender woman with a short denim skirt and a skin-tight, fringed Superman top approached me a few times while **MDR** were setting up. She spoke no English but had no problem speaking Portuguese to me. I had no idea what she kept talking about and I tried to make that obvious to her but she didn't seem to mind. She also didn't seem to care that I was soaked to the bone with sweat. We posed for a picture wherein she stood so close to me she somehow made a seamless connection with my body from our feet to our necks.

I finished putting away my things and dried off backstage before coming back out to watch **MDR** from the side of the stage. Within a minute Supergirl was standing next to me whispering something into my ear. If you were standing next to a live band and someone whispered something in another language into your ear you'd probably be a little confused, maybe even oblivious that it was happening. But if that person also put their breasts on your arm and a hand on your butt, you'd probably get the point. I did. I also got a kiss on the neck, a bite on the earlobe, a tongue in my ear, and the creeps. There were about forty teenagers who had stopped watching the band and who were now watching us. She whispered something again that could have been "the book is on the table" for all I knew, and then she bound off.

A few songs later Paulisto's guitar rig started causing problems so I went to help troubleshoot. In between banging my fist on the amp and going to get another cable, she came back and tried snuggling up again. I was obviously a little preoccupied trying to solve the guitar problem and when we finally got it fixed she was gone again.

The remainder of the show went smoothly with no riots, no more fights, and a lot of **WHN?** bootleg shirt buying. I heard that some guy outside was selling vegan burgers for small change so I went looking for him and saw Paulisto walking hand-in-hand into the darkness with Supergirl. I was flattered for what attention she already gave to me and am glad I didn't make myself go through the awkwardness of making out with her just because the opportunity came up (so to speak).

Mozine handed me a couple vegan burgers and we walked back to

the van ready for our all-night trip to his hometown, Vila Vehla. We waited and waited but neither Breck nor Paulisto were anywhere to be seen. Max got bored and hauled out his skateboard while the feral kids threw bottles into the street and vomited on each other. A half-hour later everybody was suddenly present, (Breck and Paulisto were blushing under Nino's accusations as to their whereabouts), and we hopped into the van positively giddy for another opportunity to sleep upright.

As we pulled away Mozine panicked and jumped out of the van. He came back twenty minutes later and said, "Fuck, man. I forget getting our money."

Day 5: Doesn't anybody speak English around here?
I woke up to see the sun rising through the mists of the eastern Amazon. I thought: *It's gonna be a good day.*

Unfortunately, all the time spent sitting in the same position over the last couple days has made my feet and ankles bloat—and Max is complaining that his nuts hurt because they act as a door-stop while he sleeps, keeping his body from sliding off the edge of the seat.

We were more than happy to be spending the next few days in one city, especially one that sat right on the beach. Motorista and Co-Pilot dropped everybody off one-by-one until finally stopping at Mozine's parents' house where Max, Devon, Daniel and I were staying. We dumped our things and spent the day running around town doing errands with Mozine. In every town so far Mozine seemed to know everybody. When the lyric/explanation inserts for our CD weren't ready in time for our first show he said it would be no problem because he knew everyone who bought the CD and he'd be able to track them down once they were printed. But I never realized the magnitude of his social scope until we spent the day with him in his home town: we couldn't go anywhere without him stopping and chatting with someone, even at traffic lights.

Come show-time, I was so exhausted that I wasn't ready to "rock" maybe so much as "adult contemporary," but the radio station sponsoring the event was playing the **Descendents'** *Milo Goes To College* record start to finish, giving me a second wind for the first band, **Jazzus**. They played super spastic, super sloppy, and super energetic hardcore. They were incredibly fun to watch. So fun, in fact, that they zapped the last of my energy and I had to take a nap after they finished.

Discarga were just starting to play when I came to and I couldn't help but think that they were one of the best bands I had ever seen. Only, I didn't remember there being can-can dancers or pyrotechnics in their show until Devon, who was asleep next to me, nudged me and said, "**Discarga** are starting—let's go watch." I woke up for real that time and, minus the can-can dancers and pyrotechnics, they were still totally awesome. I spent most of the set putting rocks down Nino's underwear and screeching "*Nyaughnt!*" in his ear. He retaliated by taking out his dentures and wiping them on me.

As we played all I could think was: *Aren't the neighbors gonna be pissed?* The venue, Entre Amigos II, was an open-air picnic tent and the neighbors lived very close and the music was very loud. As far as we knew, nobody complained and the show lasted in its entirety with **MDR** showing their hometown what culture could be found if you looked (and listened) close enough.

The club owner approached us after the show and thanked us. He was really hip on doing punk shows because "everybody enjoy—from blackest black, to whitest white," referring to the unusually diverse group of kids who came to the show. "And nobody steals anything."

We went back to Mozine's house and his mom was busy preparing us a midnight snack of rice, sweet potatoes, and fried bananas while his dad sat in front of the TV watching heavy-metal videos.

At some very late hour we passed out on the patio to the sounds of roosters' cock-a-doodle-doo'ing and some kid riding around the neighborhood on his bicycle and blowing a whistle.

Day 6: Fartito is born.
At 6:30am sharp I was awoken by the rhythmic thump and over-zealous aerobic commands of a high-impact fitness class emanating at full-blast from the open-window gym directly across the street. "*Uma..dos..tres..quatro... uma..dos..tres..quatro,*" a fruity voice yelled, completely amplified for the whole neighborhood to hear. It took me a little while but I was somehow able to incorporate the scene into a dream and didn't fully wake-up until sun-up a couple hours later. I wandered into Mozine's room and he was on the phone while Mama swept his floor and GG Allin's *Scars On My Body/Scabs On My Dick* played loudly over the stereo. She saw me and motioned to follow her into the kitchen where she presented a grand feast of rice, sweet potatoes and fried bananas. I ate and then took another nap.

I woke up to yet another meal. We ate and then cruised to the beach where we spent the better part of the afternoon frolicking in the waves and sculpting sand-genitals. All the eating has helped me to recapture my crown as the fart King with Mozine clocking in at a close second. He has since been dubbed Fartito and is now my sidekick.

"Fartman?"

"What is it, Fartito?"

"What injustice will we face tonight?"

"Well, Fartito, I can't say—so all we can do is prepare ourselves. Let's eat."

After another round of rice, sweet potatoes and fried bananas, Fartito and I went to Allan **Jazzus'** home to pick up Karoline and Robert. Mozine told Max and Devon that we'd just be a minute. Mozine failed to inform them that it was gonna be a Brasillian minute.

As soon as we arrived at Allan's apartment complex Mozine told me to wait while he dropped something off at Breck's apartment next door. He left me with two guys who spoke no English. We played charades for a few minutes until some girls walked by and I was forgotten. Some time later, Robert (who incidentally never wears underwear and has gone months without changing his pants) and Karoline came downstairs with their entire luggage. We followed a group of locals thinking we were heading back Mozine's but wound up at a snooker bar.

Twelve pints and ninety minutes later we finally left to pick up Max and Devon before heading to an açai shop and ordered a yummy ice cream-like dish offering over 2,000 calories per serving.

We waddled back to Mozine's and I got to check my e-mail before going to bed. My mom informed me that she has two weeks to find a new house because the one she's currently renting a room from just sold. Plus my dad got laid-off for the fourth time in as many years, and my newly married sister is pregnant. I made a note-to-self not to read any more e-mails from family members until I returned home. We fell asleep on the patio to the sounds of a guy on a bike blowing a whistle and a rooster who was a couple time zones too early.

Day 7: Robert donates blood to an air conditioning shelf. Three times.
I vaguely remember the aerobics class this morning and only because when I rolled over and looked all I saw was a row of lycra-clad ass pointing at me. Good dreams followed and as it turns out, my morning woods are back on schedule. I woke up a couple hours later to Robert crouching over me and clenching his forehead. Robert, (who long ago had reconstructive surgery after his face was bashed in by skinheads who wrongfully called his Japanese then-girlfriend a *Chink* and not, as he corrected them, a *Jap)*, ran into the air conditioning shelf (for the second time this morning) and was now bleeding generously from the forehead. He put his wound under the bathroom faucet for a while and I waited until he was done before brushing my teeth. When I finished brushing he came back in clenching his head, apparently after hitting it yet again. *(Actually, the first time only hurt, it was the second that split my face open...but I suppose the point is that I'm a clumsy oaf who ran face first into a concrete shelf that was placed at eye level. —Robert).*

Mama had a table full of food ready for us and as I walked into the kitchen she grabbed my shoulders, gave me a hug and called me her *Blondito*—her little blond. Moms sure can rule. Mozine's sister explained in smooth English that her and her family, clad in their Sunday's Best, are going to church. We thanked them for their overwhelming hospitality and they walked out the front door. Seconds later Mozine walked into the kitchen wearing only a pair of shabby boxer shorts and scratching his nuts. He headed straight for the fridge and when he opened the door, patted his stomach as if to say, "What'll it be today, old buddy?"

The day was lazily spent doing laundry and swimming, and topped off with another trip to eat some açai. Before bed we watched a videotape of Mozine and Bebe's (**MRD**'s singer) old band **Os Pedrero** playing on a children's show. As they played a number kept running across the screen that turned out to be Paulisto's home phone number. Paulisto, as you can imagine, was not aware of this—nor was he prepared for all the phone calls that followed.

Day 8: Thrashcore Max gets thrashed by maximum ocean.
Max and I got up early and took advantage of our last day by the ocean. He got pretty mangled and finally gave up once his "doorstop" got ground into the seafloor.

We ate one last grand feast, packed up a box of new acquisitions to send home and assembled Laja's new releases (including our own). To my surprise the latest **MDR** record sold 4,000 copies in one month. That's impressive on its own but consider the fact that this is Brasil and not the US or Europe and that it was done with no advertising or media promotion—just by word of mouth and touring. No wonder our shows with them were so huge.

Mama welled up as we filed out to the van.

We stopped first at the post office where the exceptionally spicy lady behind the counter flirted with Mozine and posted our box conservatively without even weighing it (though it still cost $50USD to mail home). Then it was onto a regular old Greyhound-style bus for our fourteen hour ride back to São Paulo...

(Be sure to check out next month's issue for the exciting conclusion of WHAT HAPPENS NEXT's trip through Brasil!)

RADIO 4

Interview by Jill Hubley, pictures by Rob Reddy and Jill Hubley.

Do you want new wave or do you want the truth? Both, you say? Well, you're in luck because Radio 4 have figured out how to give you just that. Sincerely committed to their community of New York City, Radio 4 have put out two albums that meditate on organizing and struggle. They lay down their ruminations over a volatile rocknroll dance track bent on shaking you out of your seat with its seismic resound, making you get up on the dance floor and talk to your neighbors. The band is comprised of Anthony Roman on bass and vocals, Tommy Williams on guitar and vocals, Greg Collins on drums, Gerard Garone manning the keyboards, and PJ O'Connor battering the percussion. I sat down with Anthony and Gerard before their set at Brownies in NYC. Since then, Brownies has sadly closed its doors.

MRR: First off, just a little background—if you could tell me how you all met and when the band started, that sort of thing.

Anthony: We started in 1999, so it's been three years. Me, Tommy and Greg knew each other from playing in punk rock bands forever. We just went to a five piece, what is it, six months ago maybe. Gerard came in on keyboards, and we got a percussion player, PJ.

MRR: Okay. So, the influence of the post-punk movement is pretty evident in your music, and I was wondering when all of you got into Gang of Four, Public Image Limited, and the like, and how you decided as a band to go in that direction, instead of playing more traditional rock and roll or blues based rock.

Anthony: I got into it when I was pretty young because an uncle of mine and his friends were into PiL. So I heard it really young, but I don't know when Tommy and Greg got into it. We weren't hearing a lot of this sort of music (in the present), and it was stuff we were into, so that's how we started playing in this style. Since (we first started) there have been countless bands doing the same thing. We weren't aware of any other bands (playing in post-punk fashion) back then, but it's been nice. It makes for good shows.

MRR: Besides Gang of Four and those sort of bands, where else do you draw influence? Particularly, from what genres?

Anthony: Dance music, modern dance music.

Gerard: What we listen to in the band really varies. I think people feel we only listen to Gang of Four in the van, but that's actually the last thing we listen to in the van.

MRR: Along the lines of you sounding post-punk, you have political lyrics, which doesn't happen often these days in rock music. I think that's another reason why you're linked so closely with that place and period in music.

Anthony: Yeah, well the music is militant sounding to a certain extent, and it lends itself to politics. If you're writing that way or you're thinking that way and you're playing indie rock—something that sounds like Pavement or whatever the bigger indie rock bands are, Jets to Brazil or something—I think a political content wouldn't really have the same feel.

MRR: OK, I was wondering if you could elaborate on the specific politics. Generally speaking, it seems like *Gotham* and the other records are sort of a call to arms to support the underground, and also to maybe raise forth issues of class struggle.

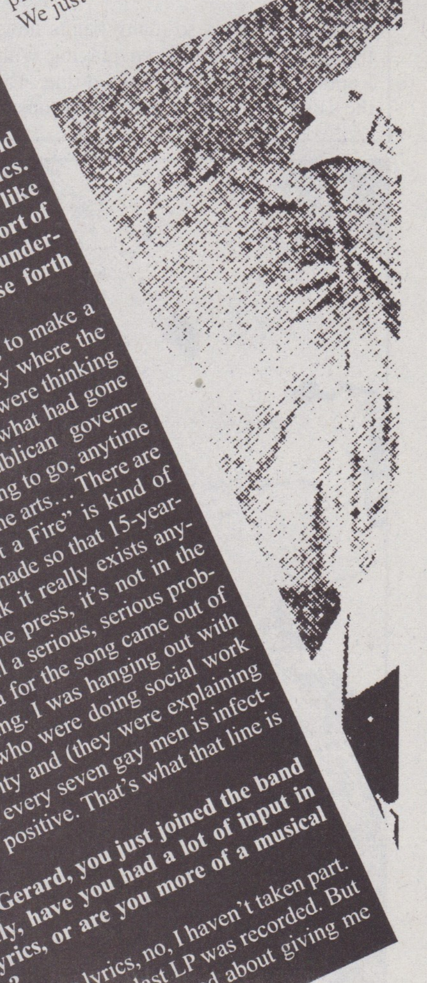
Anthony: Yeah, we were trying to make a wake up call to New York City where the themes are universal, but we were thinking of the city we're from and what had gone wrong through our Republican government. I mean, the first thing to go, anytime they cut the budgets, is the arts… There are other things too. "Start a Fire" is kind of how AIDS has been made so that 15-year-olds don't even think it really exists anymore. It's not in the press, it's not in the media, but it's still a serious, serious problem. But the idea for the song came out of a New York thing. I was hanging out with some people who were doing social work here in the city and (they were explaining that) one in every seven gay men is infected, is HIV positive. That's what that line is about.

MRR: Gerard, you just joined the band recently, have you had a lot of input in the lyrics, or are you more of a musical force?

Gerard: The lyrics, no, I haven't taken part. I joined after the last LP was recorded. But the band have been good about giving me leeway as to what I do live. So, in terms of sound, there are a lot of things I do that aren't on the record. They've given me a lot of space to just fit in really well. It's been a very smooth transition. I was really excited when they asked me to play because I was a really big fan.

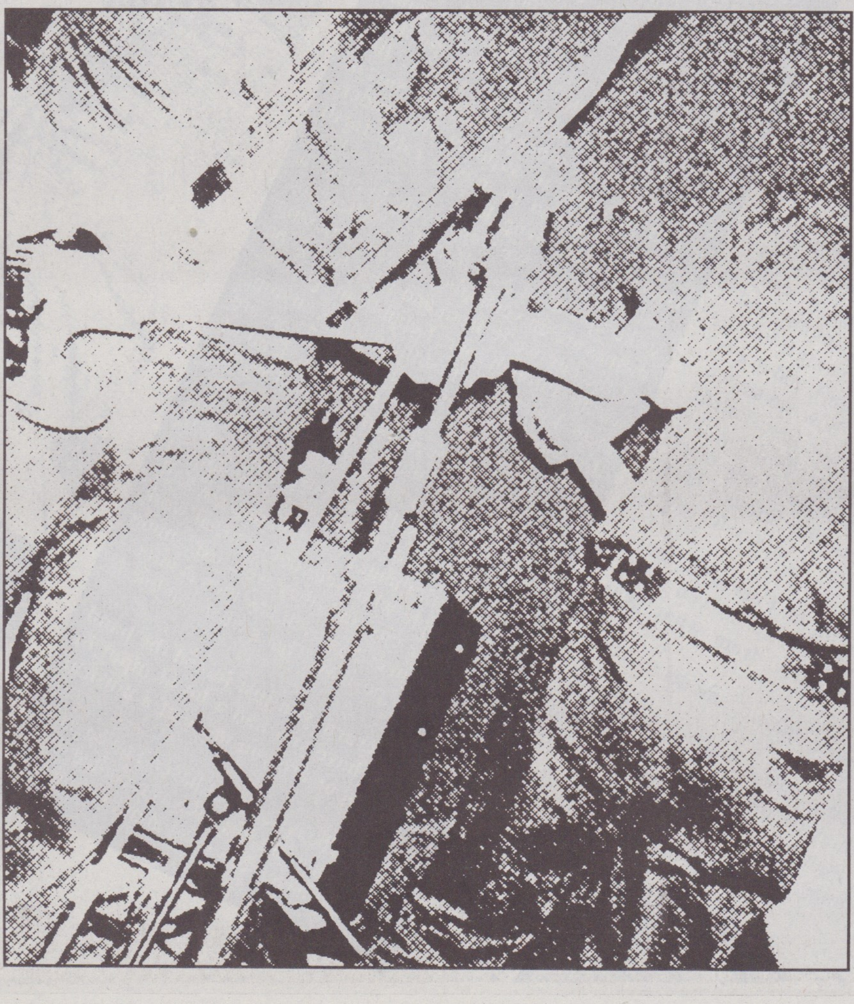
MRR: How did you meet the band—were you just friends with them?

Gerard: Well, I knew them from them playing (Brownies) because I work here. We just started talking.



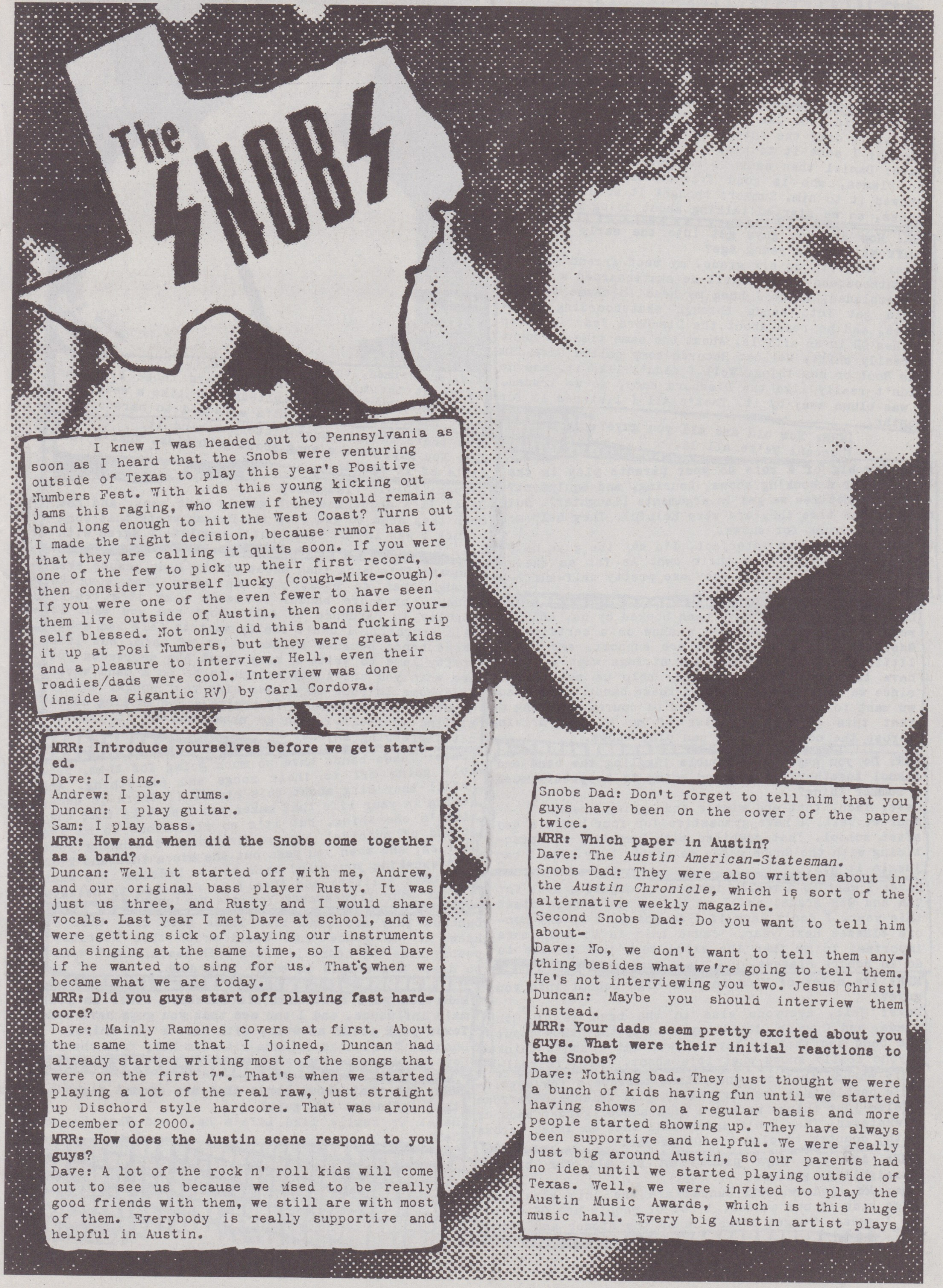
RADIO FOUR

Anthony: For a while Tommy worked here too.
Gerard: (Tommy) had mentioned a while ago that they wanted to add something.
Anthony: We were feeling limited for a while, probably six months before we did anything about it. We started to get into dancier stuff and it was hard to do with just the three of us. We didn't want to just be like The Jam. We wanted more textures and dynamics.
MRR: I know you started working with DFA (Death from Above productions.) When and how did you get involved with them?
Anthony: We knew what we wanted to do with *Gotham.* We had already gotten a percussion player—PJ had played on the *Dance to the Underground* EP. And we were kind of into the *Dance to the Underground* EP, but we felt we wanted to do something with a more modern recording technique. So, basically we just asked around the city, asking people who they thought were the best, and it just came back to James (Murphy) and Tim (Goldsworthy) every time.
MRR: Are you a fan of the other bands they've produced? The Rapture, Primal Scream, BS2000…
Anthony: Extremely. That's what they were playing for us when we went there. We didn't even know they had done Primal Scream. When I was talking to James he was like, "What've you been listening to?" and I was like, "Primal Scream," and he said he did that. They're another band with political urgency that we like.
MRR: Who else do you think your contemporaries are, as far as the sort of music you play and the message you convey?
Anthony: There's so many bands now in New York who are friends, who we've been playing with. French Kicks, Liars, Rapture, Out Hud. It's a good time. Everyone's moving about the same pace, with a few exceptions.



MRR: There are a lot of references to New York itself—the F train, Myrtle Avenue, etc. Do you think that this sense of community you're feeling in New York has to do with the current political climate and the events of last September? Or is it a more ongoing thing that's been happening, and then all of these New York bands just kind of randomly or serendipitously converged?
Anthony: It's kind of random, but there's got to be a reason for it. I think it's more on a local level than a national level. I think the bands in New York were reacting to frustrations in New York City. I think it was in motion before the 11th. I think, subconsciously, people were creating dance music because they weren't allowed to dance. I don't think it was a happy accident when Giuliani was like, "You can't dance!" and all of sudden you saw all these dance bands and everybody's playing in weird places in Brooklyn. I think if you have a punk rock nature, you'll find a way to react (to your surroundings), even if you're not 100% aware that you're doing it. It'll just come naturally to you.
MRR: How has touring been, and how was playing with Consonant, Clint Conley's (of Mission of Burma) new band?
Anthony: It was great. He's a legend, just amazing.
MRR: So you feel you've been getting a good response in the different cities you've played?
Anthony: Lately, yeah.
MRR: So what are your plans for the future? Do you see yourself doing another 7" or another full length any time soon?
Anthony: Nothing's planned yet. Just more touring.
MRR: Are you happy with Gern Blandsten?
Anthony: Sure. Yeah, we just got engaged.
MRR: Anything else you want to say?
Anthony: No, you know, I've just read *MRR* since I was a kid, so I'm glad to do this. People should check out what's happening in New York.

Visit Radio 4 at: www.r4ny.com, or contact them at: Radio 4, c/o Something Else, 294 5th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215



I knew I was headed out to Pennsylvania as soon as I heard that the Snobs were venturing outside of Texas to play this year's Positive Numbers Fest. With kids this young kicking out jams this raging, who knew if they would remain a band long enough to hit the West Coast? Turns out I made the right decision, because rumor has it that they are calling it quits soon. If you were one of the few to pick up their first record, then consider yourself lucky (cough-Mike-cough). If you were one of the even fewer to have seen them live outside of Austin, then consider yourself blessed. Not only did this band fucking rip it up at Posi Numbers, but they were great kids and a pleasure to interview. Hell, even their roadies/dads were cool. Interview was done (inside a gigantic RV) by Carl Cordova.

MRR: Introduce yourselves before we get started.
Dave: I sing.
Andrew: I play drums.
Duncan: I play guitar.
Sam: I play bass.

MRR: How and when did the Snobs come together as a band?
Duncan: Well it started off with me, Andrew, and our original bass player Rusty. It was just us three, and Rusty and I would share vocals. Last year I met Dave at school, and we were getting sick of playing our instruments and singing at the same time, so I asked Dave if he wanted to sing for us. That's when we became what we are today.

MRR: Did you guys start off playing fast hardcore?
Dave: Mainly Ramones covers at first. About the same time that I joined, Duncan had already started writing most of the songs that were on the first 7". That's when we started playing a lot of the real raw, just straight up Dischord style hardcore. That was around December of 2000.

MRR: How does the Austin scene respond to you guys?
Dave: A lot of the rock n' roll kids will come out to see us because we used to be really good friends with them, we still are with most of them. Everybody is really supportive and helpful in Austin.

Snobs Dad: Don't forget to tell him that you guys have been on the cover of the paper twice.

MRR: Which paper in Austin?
Dave: The *Austin American-Statesman*.
Snobs Dad: They were also written about in the *Austin Chronicle*, which is sort of the alternative weekly magazine.
Second Snobs Dad: Do you want to tell him about–
Dave: No, we don't want to tell them anything besides what *we're* going to tell them. He's not interviewing you two. Jesus Christ!
Duncan: Maybe you should interview them instead.

MRR: Your dads seem pretty excited about you guys. What were their initial reactions to the Snobs?
Dave: Nothing bad. They just thought we were a bunch of kids having fun until we started having shows on a regular basis and more people started showing up. They have always been supportive and helpful. We were really just big around Austin, so our parents had no idea until we started playing outside of Texas. Well, we were invited to play the Austin Music Awards, which is this huge music hall. Every big Austin artist plays

there, so when we were invited to open for it we were like "wow."

MRR: Was this before you guys were on My War Records?

Duncan: After My War.

MRR: How did Matt Summers (My War) find out about you guys?

Dave: A kid from San Antonio named Daniel Rosen got our stuff over the internet.

Duncan: I sent it to him.

Dave: Daniel then sent it to John Devlin from Down in Flames, who is good friends with Summers, and showed it to him. Summers thought it sounded good, I guess, so we started talking about doing a record.

MRR: How did you guys get into the early Dischord stuff at such an young age?

Dave: In fifth or six grade, my best friend Ben and I skateboarded a lot...well he skateboarded a lot. I rollerbladed, which I hang my head in shame for. He would get into bands through skateboarding magazines, and he read about the Dischord *Year in Seven Inches* CD in an article. About the same time I bought a really shitty Hellcat Records comp called *Give 'Em the Boot* or something. Well I didn't like it, and he didn't really like the Dischord comp, so we traded. I was blown away by it. That's all I listened to for months.

MRR: How old are all you guys?

Duncan: We're all 14.

MRR: How big of a role do your parents play in the band as far a booking shows, touring, and equipment?

Andrew: Sometimes we get in arguments (laughter). But most of the time they are very helpful. They help me set up my drums for shows.

Snobs Dad: If I can interject, I'd say the guys have done it pretty much on their own. As far as their recordings and bookings, they are pretty self-sufficient in that regard.

Dave: All the shows have been booked by us, and then we tell them that we have a show on a certain day. Basically their main roles are support, and buying little things like picks and strings when we don't have the money off-hand. They help us sell merch, since we haven't seen most of these bands before, and we want to check them out. And of course, helping us rent this gigantic monster of an RV and driving across the country so we can play shows.

MRR: Do you guys have trouble juggling the band and school together? Is touring going to be pretty much a summer thing?

Dave: Yeah, that and winter and spring break.

Andrew: Well, I have gymnastics for four hours a day after school. That combined with homework and practicing with the Snobs makes me pretty busy. But I can juggle it all.

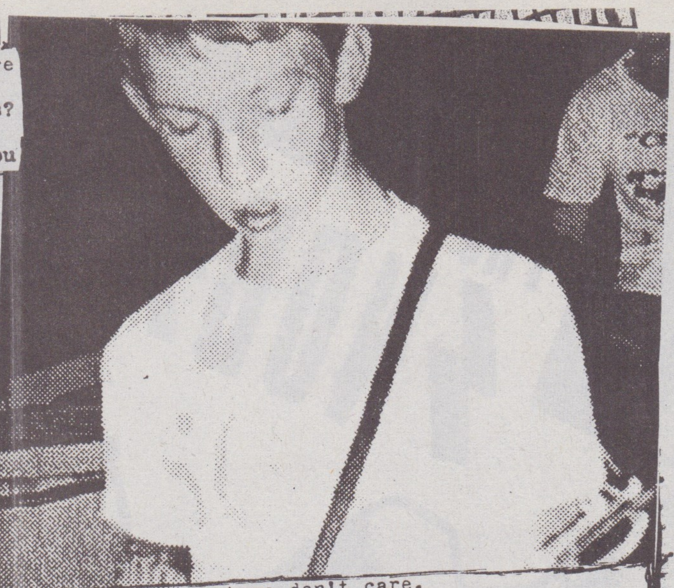
Dave: I went to a really impossible magnet school for 7th and 8th grade, and I am taking one honors class this year. I don't know if I am going to do any honors classes next year, 'cause this is so much more important to me than the extra work that I have to do in honors classes.

MRR: Are a lot of kids in your high school into you guys?

Dave: Well, everyone else in the band is in 8th grade, and I am in 9th. At my school, they know about the band and that we have shows, but I don't think anyone really knows what it's about. There is really nobody that can understand besides a few specific people that are our really good friends. Everyone else just thinks we are a high school garage band or whatever. They don't understand that we drove across the country to play to 600 people.

MRR: Are you guys picked on at all for being straightedge skaters?

Sam: Me, Andrew, and Duncan are the only straight edge kids at our school. A lot of people are OK with it I guess. We get picked on by the stoner and goth kids sometimes, but we don't care.



Dave: At the high school, you have those kids who claim that they are straightedge for like a week, but they have no clue that it's attached to hardcore or that there is this huge history behind it.

MRR: You guys have a song about goth kids. What's the title of it again?

Duncan: "Die." (laughter)

Dave: It's about how much gothic kids suck, and how much they need to get over it. Duncan wrote that song before I was in the band, but I completely agree with it.

Duncan: It's more than about gothic kids, cause even though they do suck, you can apply that song to today's hardcore bands. It seems like it's really popular in hardcore to talk about how you want to kill yourself. I don't really want to talk bad about those bands because I like a lot of them, but it's pretty lame to write a song about how depressed you are when you are lucky enough to be in a band where kids come to your shows and sing your songs. Why be negative for no reason? If you're going to sing about killing yourself...then go ahead and do it. You're not impressing anyone.

Dave: These bands have so much going for them, people going off to their songs and everything. And still they sing about this stuff. If there is something in your life that makes you feel like that then that's one thing, but it's so ridiculous to me the trend of suicidal lyrics. Everyone is singing your lyrics, and when you pass out the mic a thousand kids are speaking your mind back to you because it's what you have written, and then I am supposed to believe that your life sucks? You are so lucky!

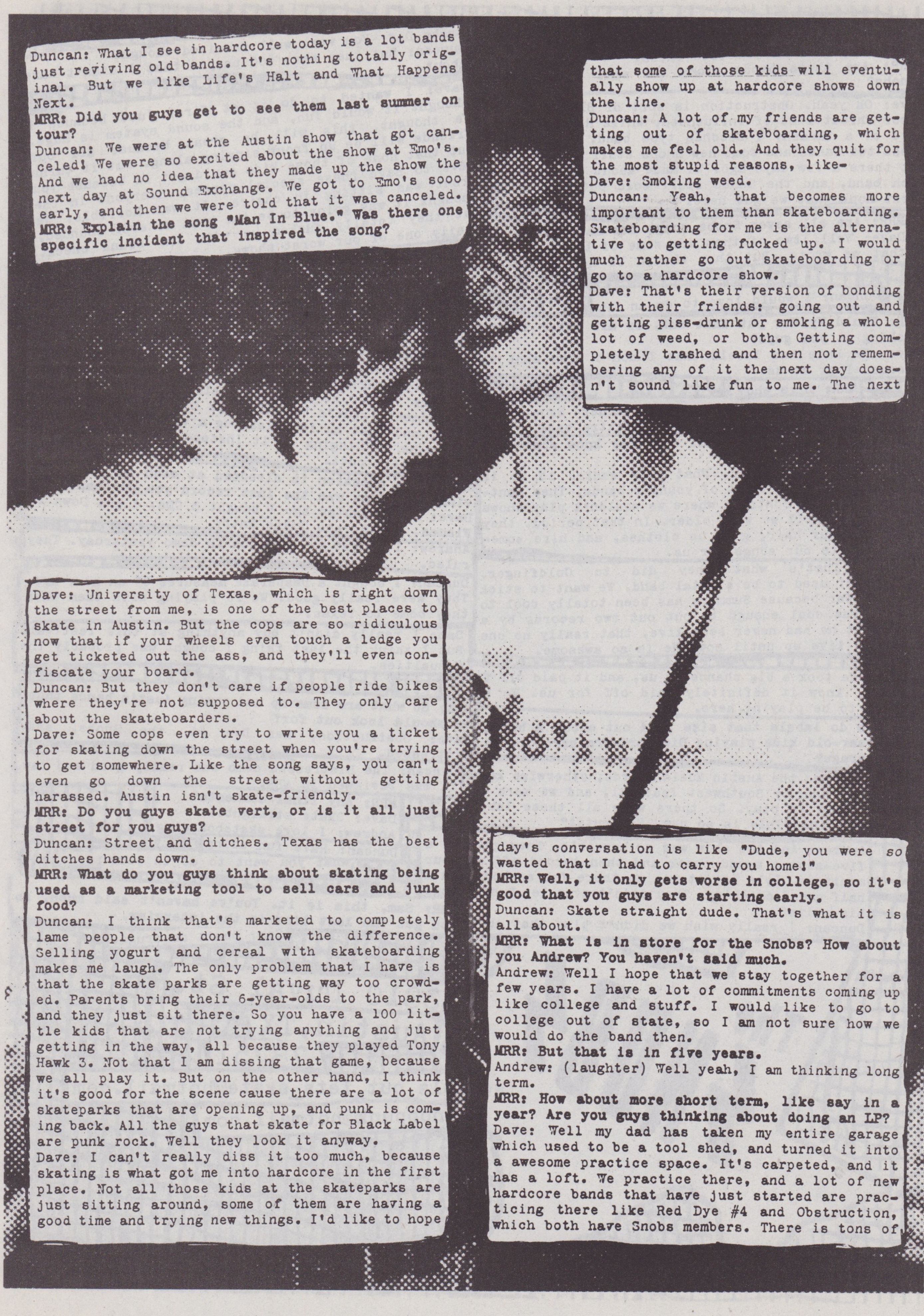
Duncan: They are just like these goth kids that I knew in 7th grade that would write this horrible poetry like "My heart is black with death, and I want to die." How stupid is that? It's dumb.

MRR: You guys mentioned old Dischord stuff as your main influence, and I can see that you guys have some Texas punk pride as well, with Dave's MDC shirt.

Duncan: We're also friends with Tim Kerr from the Big Boys.

MRR: But what about bands that are around right now that influence you guys?

Dave: We really like Life's Halt and What Happens Next.



Duncan: What I see in hardcore today is a lot bands just reviving old bands. It's nothing totally original. But we like Life's Halt and What Happens Next.

MRR: Did you guys get to see them last summer on tour?

Duncan: We were at the Austin show that got canceled! We were so excited about the show at Emo's. And we had no idea that they made up the show the next day at Sound Exchange. We got to Emo's sooo early, and then we were told that it was canceled.

MRR: Explain the song "Man In Blue." Was there one specific incident that inspired the song?

Dave: University of Texas, which is right down the street from me, is one of the best places to skate in Austin. But the cops are so ridiculous now that if your wheels even touch a ledge you get ticketed out the ass, and they'll even confiscate your board.

Duncan: But they don't care if people ride bikes where they're not supposed to. They only care about the skateboarders.

Dave: Some cops even try to write you a ticket for skating down the street when you're trying to get somewhere. Like the song says, you can't even go down the street without getting harassed. Austin isn't skate-friendly.

MRR: Do you guys skate vert, or is it all just street for you guys?

Duncan: Street and ditches. Texas has the best ditches hands down.

MRR: What do you guys think about skating being used as a marketing tool to sell cars and junk food?

Duncan: I think that's marketed to completely lame people that don't know the difference. Selling yogurt and cereal with skateboarding makes me laugh. The only problem that I have is that the skate parks are getting way too crowded. Parents bring their 6-year-olds to the park, and they just sit there. So you have a 100 little kids that are not trying anything and just getting in the way, all because they played Tony Hawk 3. Not that I am dissing that game, because we all play it. But on the other hand, I think it's good for the scene cause there are a lot of skateparks that are opening up, and punk is coming back. All the guys that skate for Black Label are punk rock. Well they look it anyway.

Dave: I can't really diss it too much, because skating is what got me into hardcore in the first place. Not all those kids at the skateparks are just sitting around, some of them are having a good time and trying new things. I'd like to hope that some of those kids will eventually show up at hardcore shows down the line.

Duncan: A lot of my friends are getting out of skateboarding, which makes me feel old. And they quit for the most stupid reasons, like-

Dave: Smoking weed.

Duncan: Yeah, that becomes more important to them than skateboarding. Skateboarding for me is the alternative to getting fucked up. I would much rather go out skateboarding or go to a hardcore show.

Dave: That's their version of bonding with their friends: going out and getting piss-drunk or smoking a whole lot of weed, or both. Getting completely trashed and then not remembering any of it the next day doesn't sound like fun to me. The next day's conversation is like "Dude, you were *so* wasted that I had to carry you home!"

MRR: Well, it only gets worse in college, so it's good that you guys are starting early.

Duncan: Skate straight dude. That's what it is all about.

MRR: What is in store for the Snobs? How about you Andrew? You haven't said much.

Andrew: Well I hope that we stay together for a few years. I have a lot of commitments coming up like college and stuff. I would like to go to college out of state, so I am not sure how we would do the band then.

MRR: But that is in five years.

Andrew: (laughter) Well yeah, I am thinking long term.

MRR: How about more short term, like say in a year? Are you guys thinking about doing an LP?

Dave: Well my dad has taken my entire garage which used to be a tool shed, and turned it into a awesome practice space. It's carpeted, and it has a loft. We practice there, and a lot of new hardcore bands that have just started are practicing there like Red Dye #4 and Obstruction, which both have Snobs members. There is tons of

bands in Austin that are our age just starting up. Everybody gets to practice there.

MRR: Are these bands along the same lines as the Snobs?

Dave: Oh yeah. Obstruction is sort of Black Flag or Minor Threat kind of influenced, while Red Dye #4 is more of a thrashy 7 Seconds type band. We recorded those two bands and some new Snobs stuff on a 4-track out there a few days ago. We made about 50 copies of each band, and the Snobs stuff sold out within the first hour that we got here.

MRR: Are all seven Snobs songs new material?

Dave: Well, two of them are some of the first songs that we wrote. But they should be new to everyone else.

Duncan: I would love to do an LP.

MRR: Would My War put that out, or are other labels looking at you guys?

Dave: We have had labels that I don't even want to discuss look at us.

MRR: Like who?

Dave: We've been contacted by Warner Bros. and Elektra Records. We didn't email Elektra back.

MRR: What?! How in the hell did they know about you guys?

Dave: They're retarded. What they wanted to do is what they do with a lot of younger bands. They wanted to give us a contract where we wouldn't play shows for awhile until we were older. In that period, they would cut our hair, give us clothes, and hire someone to write our songs for us.

Duncan: That's what they did to Goldfinger. Goldfinger used to be a metal band. We want to stick with My War because Summers has been totally cool to us. He was cool enough to put out two records by a band that he had never seen live, that really no one had seen live up until now. He is so awesome.

Dave: He took a big chance on us, and it paid off for him. I know it definitely paid off for us. We are happy to be playing here.

MRR: How do labels that size find out about a bunch of 14-year-old kids playing Dischord-era hardcore in their garage?

Dave: It was the Austin Music Awards, otherwise known as the South by Southwest festival, and we were the first band to play. So there were all these labels there saying "This is so new. How cute!"

Andrew: And the show was *so* horrible. They gave us a five-second sound check and then turned off all our monitors. Lyle Lovett was up there for an hour and a half sound checking. They didn't even let Duncan tune his guitar.

Duncan: I really wish we didn't play that show.

Snobs Dad: You were well received though.

Duncan: But they were 600 people that I didn't care about.

Dave: I wanted to do it at first just because I thought it would fun, and the sound system is huge. We thought, this will be great because all our friends will be up front singing along. But it turns out that none of those kids could get in because you have to have these special passes. Everyone in the front was sitting in chairs. It was horrible. We thought it was going to be the best we ever sounded, but they totally fucked us with the sound check. Easily one of our worst shows.

MRR: What was one of your best shows?

Andrew: Fugazi.

Duncan: Definitely Fugazi. Music-wise we played really well, but the crowd I don't think was into it. They looked like the typical Fugazi crowd. But I got to meet Ian MacKaye which was cool because we did Minor Threat for a sound check, and then we played DC's Youth Brigade and Government Issue's "Asshole" in our set. He started telling me about how Government Issue's "Asshole" is his favorite song by them, and that he is releasing a version of the song where he is singing on it instead of John Stabb. He was totally cool.

MRR: This question is directed at each of you individually. What was the last record you purchased?

Dave: Five minutes ago I bought 3 CDs. I got Down in Flames, Rambo, and Token Entry.

Andrew: I bought an Invasion CD demo yesterday. They ruled.

Duncan: I bought a Desperate Measures 7" an hour ago. They were really good. We're playing with them when they come to Texas.

Sam: I really didn't buy anything at this festival. But I think the last thing I bought was probably the Casualties.

MRR: So what are some up and coming Austin bands that we should look out for?

Dave: Obstruction, Red Dye #4, the Snobs, and Distressed.

Duncan: The Distressed demo was really good and raw. It was reviewed in *MRR*.

MRR: Any final comments?

Dave: Skate straight!!

Andrew: I love skateboarding.

Duncan: Have fun doing what you want to do in your life.

MRR: Sam, this is it. You've haven't said much, so you get the last line in the interview.

Sam: Don't do drugs.

The SNOBS

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THE PEAWEES

Interview by Liz Hellsfire.

The Peawees hail from a sleepy Italian seaside town called Las Pezia. They are already well known in Italy, and they're taking over the rest of the punkrock world slowly. Now with their latest album *Dead End City* out, that some consider a classic already, it is time to speed up world domination. This is rock 'n' roll!!!

MRR: To start with, the predicable questions: Give us some kind of summary of who you are, what you do, how you ended up together as the line-up you are today?

Lalo: Okay, the original line-up in '95 featured me, Hervè and Livio. With this line-up we recorded our first album, *Where People Smile,* on Panic Records, an Italian label. In '97 we took another guitar player, and the year after, two labels (Motherbox Records from New York and Fridge Records from Milan) got together to release our second album, *This is Rock 'n' Roll.* In '99 the line-up underwent a couple of changes, because me and Hervè had a different point of view than the other two members of the band. So now the actual line-up is Hervè (guitar and vocals), Pulcio (drums), Jacopo (guitar), and I'm the bass man. This line-up played on our recently released third album, *Dead End City,* on the Dutch label, Stardumb Records.

MRR: I think there was a huge difference between *Where People Smile* and *This Is Rock 'n' Roll.* Was this just from getting more mature as a band, or did you make the decision to change your style?

Hervè: It was a natural change, not forced at all. At the time we put out *Where People Smile,* we were pretty young and those songs were just the first things we tried. We wrote that stuff in a few weeks without thinking about production, arrangement, or stuff like that. It was a pure teenage sound!

MRR: There's about three years between *Where People Smile* and *This is Rock 'n' Roll*, so we had all the time to improve as musicians and songwriters. We got more into bands like The Clash, Ramones, and early Stiff Little Fingers. When you're writing songs, your main influences are what you are listening to in that particular moment. I think that's the other reason why those albums sound so different.

Between *This Is Rock 'n' Roll* and the new album, *Dead End City,* there's a big difference again. They're both punk rock 'n' roll, but they're different. What happened this time?

Lalo: *Dead End City* is the sound we were looking for since the time we were writing *This is Rock 'n' Roll.* We still think that our second album sounds very good, but during the gap we had the chance to develop our musical background. Since '97 we've gotten more into rock 'n' roll, doo-wop, country, and rockabilly stuff, and we started to fix it up in a Peawees way. *Dead End City* is the result.

MRR: Can you explain why you always spell the name of your hometown "Las Pezia" instead of "La Spezia"?

Pulcio: It's just a joke. In '91 the Ramones played here, and in their book, *An American Band,* they spelled La Spezia as "Las Pezia" by mistake, so it looked like Las Vegas. We thought that was funny, so we decided it was the new name of our hometown!

MRR: When I listen to your music I hear a lot of different influences, from 50s rockabilly to punk rock. Most of the time you are compared to bands like The Devil Dogs, Ramones, The Clash and Social Distortion. What music influenced you the most?

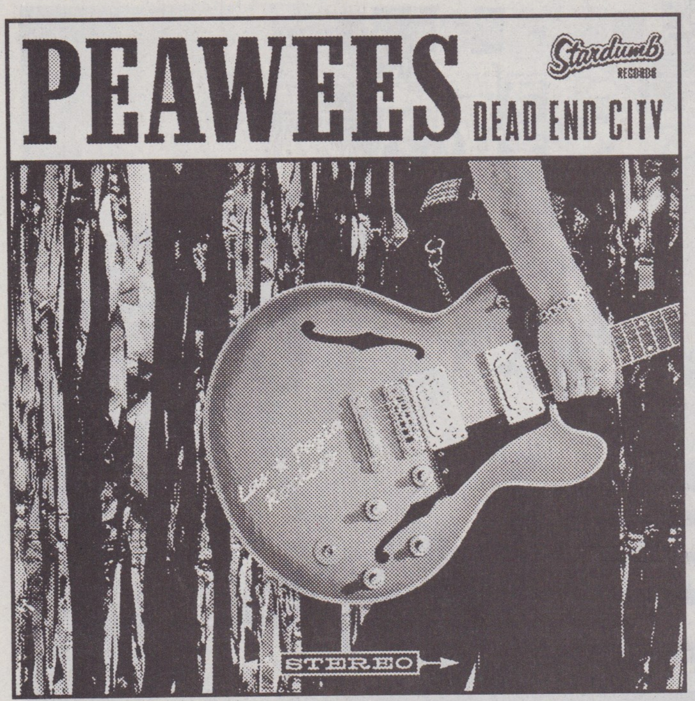
Pulcio: It's a hard to answer that. Every one of us has a different musical background. The Ramones and The Clash are really important in our lives, but I think that our sound can't be restricted to those bands. Lots of people say that we are the Italian Social Distortion. Well, it's a big honor to be compared to them, but we do not sound like them! The problem is that people always want to label your sound. If you have to ask what music influenced us the most we just reply: "Rock 'n' Roll, baby!":

MRR: On *This Is Rock 'n' Roll,* you chose "Burning Love" by Elvis as a cover song, and on *Dead End City, Proud Mary* by Creedence Clearwater Revival. Why *these* songs?

Lalo: Both songs were played by Elvis during the 70s. We really love that period; but it's important to say we even love the Creedence. Before recording *Dead End City,* we were in doubt about which cover song to put on the album. First we thought about a 50s song, but in the end we chose "Proud Mary" 'cause it fit with the other stuff.

MRR: Your latest album has been released on Stardumb Records, an new label from the Netherlands. How did they take an interest in The Peawees, and how do you fit in with the rest of their bands?

Pulcio: If I remember, they bought our second album during their



first visit to Italy and it seems like they really liked us. When we were touring in the UK, Stefan and Kevin from Stardumb came over and followed us for three days. I think they decided to release our third album after seeing us play live. We are a kind of one of the few black sheep in the Stardumb family because most of the other bands are more into the pop-punk sound. Anyway, we are very happy to be in this "family". Stefan is doing a great job and we are sure that Stardumb will continue growing and improving.

MRR: You sing in English. I know Italian punk rock bands who sing in Italian get more successful in Italy. Why did you decide to sing in English anyway?

Hervè: Well, we sing in English because our musical background is English and American. We don't care if the Italian bands who sing in Italian have more success here. Ninety-nine percent of them really suck; most of them are really sad and pathetic.

MRR: Is it sometimes hard for you to express your feelings in a language that's not your own?

Hervè: Of course, sometimes, but we grew up listening to English lyrics so that's what we learned.

MRR: A lotta people think you have a great voice. What five people have the greatest voices, according to you?

Hervè: Thanks a lot! Well, if I have to name five voices I like best they'd be Gene Vincent, Elvis, Joe Strummer, Glenn Danzig, and Johnny Cash. I could tell you more and more, like Gerry Roslie, Otis Redding, Dion—I don't know why I like these voices so much. It's something magical, you know.

MRR: Walking around the Stardumb office, I heard a rumor about The Peawees doing a split 7" with Andy G. and The Roller Kings. Anything sure about that yet?

Pulcio: Stefan told us he got in touch with Andy G., and it seems that Andy G. is interested, but sincerely we don't know if it will happen. We really hope so because they are a great band.

MRR: The Italian scene is getting known all over the world. Another famous punk rock band from La Spezia is The Manges. Is it something in the water over there? It's kinda surprising to see two of the most successful Italian punk rock'n'roll bands come from the same small city!

Hervè: It seems that the Italian scene in general is growing up day by day, but there is still a lot of work to do before we can say it's a real international scene. Surely, Las Pezia is, at the moment, one of the best cities in Italy to play punk rock or rock 'n' roll. We, together with the Manges, and the Skaletta Club, made a real rock city. We are very proud of this because it really was a dead-end city before we started rocking. Now lots of kids are coming to shows, playing in bands, buying the right records, etc. And that's great! By the way, our water is okay but you'd better try our wine!

MRR: You played in The Manges yourself, before you started The Peawees. Why did you leave The Manges?

Hervè: Yeah, I used to play with them until '94. I left the band because I needed to try something different. It was nothing personal, they are my friends and I still think they are a good band. I just needed a different way to express myself.

MRR: The Groovie Ghoulies covered your song, "Cause You Don't Know Me," on their last *Summer Fun* EP and Screeching Weasel covered "I Will Always Do" by The Manges. How does that make you feel, to have these bands show an interest in your band and your scene?

Lalo: It's great, and we are very proud of it. It was a big surprise when we heard their version of "Cause You Don't Know Me," and it was even a bigger surprise to know they played that song during their last European tour. It's always a pleasure when people show interest in what you do.

MRR: I've had the pleasure of seeing you do your thing on stage, a very energetic live show. What does doing shows and touring mean to you? How are the fans treating to you?

Pulcio: Thank you! We love touring and playing live... If we could we would always be on tour. We have cool fans! Some of them travel hundred miles to see us and that's a big honor.. You guys rock!

MRR: Do you have any funny stories of something that happened during a gig?

Jacopo: The last one happened about three weeks ago during the Las Pezia Summer Festival. Four bands played that night and all the guitar tuners were fucked up. We played last and we had our guitars tuned a half tone up, so Hervè had to scream loud as hell. At the end of the show he was almost dying while everybody was laughing at him because he had to sing like Pavarotti!

MRR: You have toured in some parts of the States in '98, and since then you have been around in Europe. Do you have any anticipations to tour in the near future?

Lalo: We have lots of projects in the future. We surely want to tour the U.S. again. We were there in '98 around the east coast, so would be great to see the west coast next time..

We were supposed to tour Europe again this summer but we had some problems with our jobs, so we hope to do it next winter.

MRR: Do you have any future plans for the Peawees we should know about, or anything you want to add, or give free publicity to?

Hervè: As we already told you, we want to tour, and tour as much as we can. We are also writing new stuff for some upcoming releases, like a new 7" that will probably be out soon on the German label Green Hell/Stereodrive. Oh! And Stardumb has just repressed *Dead End City* on orange vinyl! Wow! Ciao, and thanks to everybody who supports The Peawees!

Contact:
www.thepeawees.com

SELFISH

For over a decade, Finland's Selfish have been churning out great hardcore almost unnoticed to Americans. They're about to embark on a two week US tour early in November; hopefully this can serve as an eye opener to the best Japanese band that Finland has to offer...

MRR: Who are Selfish, where are you from, and how long have you been Selfish?

Selfish: Selfish is a Finnish bunch; four hi-tension, high times rock and roller, out-of-controllers! We got this name when we started in the late 80s. We have made our rocky road to become one of the most underrated European hardcore bands, ha ha! Yeah, that is actually what a friend said recently, but we still try hard most of the time to make an impression by playing this alcohol-fueled Japanese style hardcore here in cold Scandinavia

MRR: Over the course of a decade, your style has changed from a more raw punk style to the "Burning Spirits" style of Japanese HC/punk. Was the original idea to form Selfish as an homage to Japanese punk?

Selfish: The idea came about in the mid 90s when the band was totally stagnated by having all the bands around doing the same Discharge-tribute. Sure we still respect and have influences by bands like Motorhead, Anti-Cimex, and Discharge, but it just got out of hand—basically all friends of ours had turned into the "raw punk" thing and the whole scene and the musical style left us void. It felt pointless doing the same thing as everyone else. There were only two choices—either to reshape the band or fade away. We chose not to fade away (which happened to most of the contemporary bands actually!) and through changing half of the line-up and throwing all the old songs to the dustbin, we rose from the ashes. We all shared the love for Japanese kick-ass hardcore such as Death Side and Bastard. In fact we really admired these bands as early as late 80s/early 90s but they were just a wet dream. Back then we couldn't have seriously thought about the idea of actually playing the music one day, let alone the idea of playing on the very same stage! Anyway, that was the new direction we decided to choose. Not a very easy shift in the end, I mean, to evolve from a "d-beat drunk punk band" into an exciting, ambitious hardcore band with some blazing fury, eh?! Well, I think you know what I mean? However, it's not really a "homage" in the same way than, for example, Forca Macabra (my other band) is doing for the Brazilian underground. I suppose the Japanese hardcore/punk for Selfish came about slightly differently

MRR: Why the Japanese punk worship, when you come from a country that has such a strong history of great classic HC punk bands?

Selfish: Ahem, I am not really sure what you mean, since we did the "worship" for Scandinavian thrash during the first years. That was a pretty big thing in Japan back then, and the first 7" made quite an impact for many people I know. However, we changed our style into "japcore" and this was quite hard to understand for a lot of Japanese crusties since the scene is sadly really split into small sections in Japan. We had to explain over and over again our motivations for doing that and still, in the end, I think many of them did not get the point, or didn't bother to respect that. Then, on the other hand, the "japcore" punks are very much interested only in the domestic bands and for them it's sometimes hard to take seriously a bunch of whiteys who play "their" music. I am serious about this! I noticed this underlying attitude pretty well during the year I lived in Japan. But then, of course there are some people in that scene as well who really like our stuff and we are glad about that. Some of the biggest "fans" are those ex-Death Side guys who were taken by our "tribute" for them, even though it was not a real conscious tribute for them.

MRR: But why are you guys so obsessed with playing a Japanese style of punk when you could play a style that is so unique to Finland?

Selfish: Hmmm, I am still not sure what is the point. Even though there are differences in taste, in the end all styles stand equally, and are as unique, don't you think? I realize there is a distinct "Finnish hardcore" but I don't really see why all Finnish bands should do it, and in fact, the majority of the Finnish bands play something far different than the raw, fast HC/thrash we got so famous for in the early 80s. We do like old Finnish bands like Lama, Kaaos, Rattus, Kansan Uutiset, Mellakka and many others but its also a sad fact that trying to sound like those bands today just wont work. A Finnish band called Uutuus tried it and they did it pretty well but so far I have seen many bands trying it

since the late 80s and failing miserably. Think even of the bands like Riistetyt and Kaaos who have currently reformed and play gigs and record stuff. Well, in my opinion they are only a pale shadow of what they used to be. The fact can't be helped; it's not possible to make good thrash copying the early 80s sound/style these days. Yes, a lot of people will hate me for this, but I think DS-13 don't do it that well! I also believe that a style like japcore is immortal, it is not tied into a category of sound too much. You see, I mean that it is still possible to play "japcore" music and sound authentic whereas you can't sound authentic doing Finnish thrash

MRR: Chelsea and Muka-Chin from Japanese legends Death Side both appear on your side of the split 7" with Japan's Liberate. How did this come about?

Selfish: That's right. As I told you, both of them were really taken when they heard our first "japcore" recordings. They didn't know the band before, and for them it was something fresh, cool, and interesting. When we went to Japan for the first time in 1998 we met those guys and lots more Japanese punks and made good friends with them. A year later on our second tour to Japan, we were also to record this split 7" for HG Fact. Since we knew Our House Studio as a place and Chelsea as a producer would be the best combination for our kind of music, we just simply asked him to come to the recording. We knew it'd be no problem because the first time we met one of the first things he said to us was that he insists producing our next record! Muka-chin is one of his better friends, so together they turned up, which was good as we needed good voices for back-up vocals anyway. But eventually, the split recordings were mostly produced by Mr. Yanagida (the owner of the studio) since Chelsea was really drunk later that night at the studio, and Yanagida-sensei was afraid of letting him behind the knobs, ha ha! Besides, Chelsea also plays in one of the songs the melancholic, wailing guitar bit in the middle part. We needed about 101 takes for that alone which tells me he must be quite a perfectionist

MRR: What was their reaction to your cover of the Death Side song "Mirror" on your *The Joy of Industrialized Society* 7"?

Selfish: The reaction, hmmm, different reactions really. The members of Death Side, all of them were impressed for sure, which is good. I know it to be a good version; no need to be ashamed playing it to someone and also I think it's one of the best Death Side songs, both lyrically and musically, to which a lot of Japanese friends at least agree with me. Then again, Death Side is not appreciated by Japanese crusties. I explained how there are clear divisions in the scene and that there lies mistrust between the crusties and "japcore punks." So the crusties were even more shocked by us doing this cover on the record and furthermore have been blaming us for "giving the Japanese hardcore a bad name." This is amazing: they have said we have been giving a wrong idea of the Japanese hardcore to other countries' punks by exposing them to a band such as Death Side. It's fucking hilarious! Check out the lyrics for the song "Tight-ass"—that one's dedicated to all people who are that narrow minded. Luckily not all crusties are like that at all, and obviously there are also "japcore" punks that really hate crusties for no reason at all, it's a difficult situation and I don't think it's really gonna improve too soon.

MRR: Where does the animosity between the two scenes stem from?

Selfish: As far as I know, the Japanese punk/underground movement used to be "unified," in a way, all the way up to the mid 80s, or even, let's say, 1987. Of course, there were fights and a lot of violence, but it was more related to the gang relationships rather than which music style they were following. However, around '87, the scene started to split into different styles such as "crusties," "japcores," "skatethrash," etc. In the countryside, different groups were and still are today in one crowd, but there is certainly a distrust and a big lack of interest between the different scenes in big cities like Tokyo and Osaka. There are some prejudices which date back to the 80s—mainly the question of bullying and violence. Japanese are pretty sensitive about such matters, and when bands had a following in violent gangs, or had a violent image, the whole style was labeled violent, and this belief stayed firm. A lot of crusties think they are less violent or better, but they don't know about the past of their scene very well. There were violent crusties in the 80s. Then again, younger japcore punks have this fixation on "wild style;" they think they should behave a certain way and they don't really question it. That's stupid too.

MRR: I noticed that there is a definite shift in lyrical style from the earlier material, which has a more overt political tone, to the newer material, which seems to have more personal lyrics. Was this

change a conscious decision that came about when you switched musical styles, or was it something that came about with line-up changes?

Selfish: Well, it's partly both. In the beginning I did the early Selfish lyrics, then I wrote them with the bass player, and finally, by 1994 or so, he did them alone. But he also went out with this "big line-up change" in 1995 or so, and I was left again alone to do the lyrics. During the period I hadn't written lyrics. I had gone through some changes which then affected my writing. Luckily the shit I like to write suits the style we have chosen; the stuff comes out very naturally, but I really don't think my lyrics are that good—it's just that no one else in the band bothers to try writing anything, ha ha!

MRR: I'm not sure how things are in Finland, but in the US, there seems to be a lot of debate about politics in punk. There seems to be different ideas about what it means to be a political punk band. Would you consider Selfish to be a "political" band? Do you think that DIY punk is inherently subversive?

Selfish: It's the same over here, I think. As long as I can remember, politics have been part of the Finnish punk movement. I don't consider us a political band. I think political bands would be defined by a much larger emphasis on the lyrical, educational side. For us, music is more important than the lyrics, which aren't very political. I'd rather say it's a philosophy. Instructions how to live your life, ha ha! DIY is just a slogan, used way too often without any deeper understanding of the initials. The whole DIY-idea is twisted; it stands for do it yourself, doesn't it? Well, for most it seems to stand for low record prices, being an active, rather political member in the punk community, and for example boycotting this or that. For me all that seems far-fetched. I thought doing it yourself is about releases, concerts, zines, something concrete rather than just complaining. I suppose a lot people would be upset if we called ourselves DIY, but in fact we do a lot of shit ourselves!

MRR: A bit about Finland; who is the current bastard in power in Finland and what is the current political situation there?

Selfish: The supreme ruler is the president, who's a woman by the way! However, the parliament possesses the real power. That is, prime minister and company. A lot of them are annoying fucks—they are not really popular among the citizens because of the economic depression that prevails. The political situation is quite clear, however—the opposition is not a real opposition at all and we don't have any freak parties like right-wing cunts and such. The big problem is that the Finnish people are a very content, quiet flock of sheep—we hardly ever protest or complain. The majority just sits on its ass and swallows any shit that comes from the government, media, authorities etc. There is this huge problem of identity—we don't really believe in ourselves and are very easily manipulated and controlled. This has made it possible for the government to push through a lot of insane plans such as joining the European Community, bringing in the Euro currency, reactivating the building of the fifth nuclear power plant, etc.

MRR: I know that the technological boom, especially of the Nokia Corporation, has had a large effect on Finland's economy in the last ten years. Also, Finland seems to have very good financial programs for its students. What is the general economic situation in Finland? Does Finland have a problem with poverty?

Selfish: The booming markets in the late 80s/early 90s provided a lot of kids with jobs within the mobile phone and computer industries, but the limits were reached recently and now many of those boys and girls face unemployment and really can't do anything with their lives. We have masses of unemployed people, around 15% in the countryside, half of that in the towns/city. Some of them live in extreme poverty. Selfish members are not some of the richest but we all survive, ha ha! Me and the guitarist both study and

work part-time, the vocalist and the bass player are unemployed but manage somehow. It's true that students for example get benefits from the state, even a student loan with a very low interest if they wish. Unemployed people get their unemployment benefits as well. Of course this all costs for the state, so the taxes are really high. Recently this system has grown worse because there are too many unemployed folks, both old and young, also too many pensioners to be taken care of (naturally they also receive benefits and welfare). The late 90s saw diminishing benefits and a tightening of the welfare system in general.

MRR: It is very scary how in the US the people seem to be compliant with any war that the government wages. What is the general attitude toward George W. Bush's war machine, and war in general, among the Finnish people?

Selfish: Perhaps the attitude towards the George W.'s world-conquering plans is somewhat similar to what I said about the Finnish people's attitude towards any government schemes. The good ol' USA is not a nightmarish place for us, but we don't really look up to it either. Finnish people are especially annoyed for the obvious reasons by war-waging, and also by the unfair situation a lot of the US actions are causing. It usually leads all to the same points: multinationals, money, oil, economy, white people, US citizens. The Balkan operation was rather neutral for us I think; the Gulf War (vol.1 by the time I am typing this, but who knows what will happen) also, since Iraq was "the evil invader," but this war of the Afghans and especially all the plans to attack some other Islamic countries are opposed over here. Support for the government of Israel is not very popular around here either. Refugees live here, you see. As for war in general, most of us haven't experienced it. We did fight WWII, but nothing since. The climate is quite peaceful—we believe in a peaceful solution to all disagreements

MRR: Recently, after a gig in Vaasa, a punk was stabbed by what were believed to be nazi skinheads. Was this an isolated incident, or is there a big problem with fascists?

Selfish: That really was an isolated incident. Sure, one incident like that is too many. I really fucking hate nazi boneheads, but luckily we don't have too many of them. I live in Helsinki, a city of a million inhabitants, but six weeks might go by and I won't see a single skinhead/fascist on the streets, or hear a

word of their meeting, or gig either. It's really small and marginal here, luckily! Sweden, for example has way bigger problems. Anyway we all know there are some suit and tie fascists doing their schemes and trying to recruit brainless fools into their ranks. It's very unpleasant to know that, but these fuckers are very hard to fight—you never really know who they are.

MRR: Sometimes with such a focus on the "good old days," people tend to loose sight of what is happening right in front of them. What are some good things (bands, venues, projects, etc.) that are happening in the Finnish scene right now?

Selfish: Well, personally I don't mind losing contact with what is happening here and now! But we have here a good scene I think. Ever since '76 we have had shitloads of people involved and this can be seen as a big number of bands, gigs, zines, demonstrations, etc. Most importantly, all through the years we all have stuck together! It's something we can be happy about. Its really rare to find in other countries, solid scenes where all the different genres hang out and are creative (or sometimes destructive, ha ha!) together. The biggest problems here are always imposed from above: there are many strict laws that make it difficult to squat, organize gigs/demonstrations, even parties. Luckily we are not persecuted for the lyrics—there is freedom of speech (of course for nazis as well). My point is just that in some countries it's actually a risk for your health to be a punk.

MRR: You mentioned that you play earlier in Forca Macabra. What other dirty deeds are Selfish members guilty of?

Selfish: Yes, I do Forca Macabra as much as I do Selfish, and also for the third band I am drumming for, Kuolema (hyper fast HC/thrash). The vocalist plays drums in The Stakeout (old DC/Boston-style hardcore), the bassist and the guitarist both play in Disgrace (Motörhead-drunk rock). The guitarist plays some more bands which I can't remember now, different kinds of music. Then we are involved with this beautiful scene for example by having some record labels/distribution, gig-organization, etc., duties

MRR: So Selfish have been around since the late 80s. What inspires you to still be involved in DIY HC punk after all these years?

Selfish: It's the music! I just can't get it enough! I love hearing some kick-ass punk/hardcore, especially from '77-'84 era. It just makes me crazy, pogo against the walls etc. Just check out bands like Underage, Zouo, The Fix, Bombanfall, OHL, Sieg Hell, Eu's Arse, Disorder, Armagedom, Masacre68, Toreros After Ole, Death Side, Zmiv, Legion Of Parasites, Willful Neglect, Roach Motel, etc. etc. Fuck! I got into this punk thing through music, only after that I got introduced the ideological side of it. Well I am extremely happy for that because punk has given me a lot of things. I am sure I am better off this way, having been exposed to all the intellectual, educational sides of this culture and meeting many fine folks from the international hardcore/punk community. Very rarely do you get so easily in contact with other cultures and people than you do with punk, in my opinion anyway. I realized many years ago that I reached the end of the road as far as searching for new stuff. That is, I have checked out all the different musical shit that's going under the "punk" title, and also heard all the lyrics just too many times. Of all that I've made something that has become my hardcore/punk-lifestyle and it hasn't changed since that—and as far as I can see it won't change. I just feel too strong about it, hell!

MRR: What does the future hold for Selfish?

Selfish: I suppose new recordings and gigs—that is what we live for! Playing live is the best we can think of and we give always 200% on the stage, no matter how sedated we are! There is this new 7" in works, to be out this fall on Combat Rock Industry in Europe and on Feral Ward in the States. Deadalive Records will also do an album that's got some of our out-of-print EPs and compilation material on it so you American people are lucky, having the possibility to buy and consume all those items, oh well

MRR: Do you have any last words?

Selfish: Last rites. huge thanks to Mr. Interviewer for this nice set of questions. Anyone else out there please feel free to send us more interviews, or write just for the hell of it! Communication is the key. I am also a die-hard vinyl maniac so anyone with potent, old USHC for trade, please drop me a line: oitkonen@cc.joensuu.fi

There is also a webpage but I am afraid its never gonna be finished: www.geocities.com/Selfishfinland/ See you all on the East Coast tour in November 2002!

Contact: Selfish, Pekantie 26, 58500 Punkaharju, Finland.

DAS OATH

THE OATH, like SAMHAIN, have the near-impossible task of following up one of the best punk bands ever (in this case, CHARLES BRONSON), trying to improve upon but not replicate the singer's earlier band. They succeed admirably, and raise a ton of interesting questions along the way. Mark McCoy discusses life, growing up, staying punk, and of course his kick-ass band THE OATH. Interview by Ben Parker.

MRR: There seems to be a dichotomy in the identity of the Oath, with the noise/art influence combating with a youth crew/sXe style of breakdowns. Do you feel that you are doing something particularly innovative in this style, and what are you going for in this aesthetic?

Mark: I don't think we're innovative, but I would like to assume that I should be the last one to answer this. I never looked at what we were doing and sat back wondering where exactly it all fits into the course of music history. That's not my job! If anything, I think our influence has been an adverse one because we never actually came out and took a stance on any discernable viewpoints. That pisses people off, which is really the funny thing: you'd think people get into hardcore because they're sick of being told what to do or how to react, but when they see something without slogans or easy sing-along lyrics, they resent the challenge. So while people may think we're being coy or pretentious, speaking for myself it like it's only my duty to present loose ideas, not to inflict more fucking parroted lines, not pledge any self-assured allegiance to any group, and to stay the fuck off message boards. I mean, who the fuck am I? Maybe it's because we're older and have grown closer as friends beyond music where we got to the point when to we started to think why certain things didn't affect us anymore, and

it's because everything what were involved in was just a social scene where creativity, on a grand scale, came second to everything else. It seemed to us all these people with so called authority in the scene were just jerks totally self absorbed, abusing their popularity and living in some safe ass bubble where they and all their friends conveniently have every idea worked out, every question answered where everything's very respectable and pissed off at the right people and so on...it's all so fucking boring for me, it's so easy to fake this shit when you know everyone loves the idealized version of yourself you portray. I prefer to enjoy the world and see past the stale version of hardcore today. Many of the people I know from it are great, but its rate of progress as an outlet for expression for me is sluggish, predictable, and redundant.

Basically to stay in hardcore this long means bending to the current modus operandi, where getting the right reactions is totally easy when all you have to do is you maintain this level of sameness and buy into the acceptance of going with the flow of things. It's no different than anything else. punk really isn't that important, it falls right in line with reality. It's just an attachment people cling to. How about not having any answers? Instead we cling to reasons to feel reassured and confident. There's harm in that, when you're young it's more understandable…but I think people should be alone for great periods of time to have distance from their lives. Why be so defensive about beliefs? It's always too premature, it's the fault everyone seems to take of finding a voice too soon without any life experience to back it up. I know that I really know nothing of myself or of the world, I just have these hunches from a few years experience, so I constantly rewrite my beliefs in subtle forms every day. Hardcore is the opposite of this way of thinking: instead it inevitably locks you into a set grid. So one minute you got styles that in the next are gone, you got skateboarding skeletons and suddenly everyone's skating and singing about skating like its the newest thing in the world. What's the use? For me it's a joke and about as interesting as singing about sportscars and lifting weights. It's a fucking boy's club that forty years ago would've been stamp collecting. I don't need that fake nostalgic attachments to stay in touch with my youth, it's bogus and uninteresting to me. I don't need to keep hearing more fast bands rewriting each other's lyrics. Who needs another rehash? Of course these things will always exist, but why care? Why even make it? For the kids getting into it now? Please. By saying that, it's like admitting to doing this as a favor. Kids aren't stupid, they know what to look for, is it really so cool to try and redo something again and again?

In the beginning, the original idea for us was just to write songs because we could and were friends all visiting each other from far away places, so it was like capturing a moment. Then we proposed all these ideas to one another that at first all sounded like jokes, like "let's actually put this out on vinyl, and then let's go on tour!" These were all very far fetched ideas at one point. The circumstances seemed tiring and impractical but instead of tossing around pipedreams forever we actually set these goals and stuck to them. The more we talked about doing it, the more surprised we actually became at how easy it is to throw together a couple of riffs and create this documented record. You know like when you go somewhere out of the ordinary and you hear the same music repeatedly and then months later you'll hear it again unexpectedly and you're taken right back to that time. That's what it felt like. So it wasn't us trying to create something new, we were just into a certain record or band at a certain time, and so hearing that first ep now makes me recall it all. It really was intended only for us, that was it. I think the spontaneity made it feel really alive, it made me love my friends even more. Then afterwards things sort of took off.

MRR: A lot of scoobs always try to compare the Oath or Charles Bronson to bands from the 80s, implying a "retro" aspect that is present in so many bands (Ruination, Tear it Up) but I am not so certain that retro is on your mind. What is the value of regression and repetition that you see in the scene, versus the possibility of progress?

Mark: It's a paradox because I have gotten to the point that most of the hardcore listen is what made me love it in the beginning: shit I've had since junior high. I try to think about those old bands' approaches, and I try and tap into their mindsets...people have to realize now that back then that music was totally uncharted and more accepting than it is now, it was dangerous and had a point...for me it's a foundation. But that shit isn't going to happen again; I don't even want to try. Instead you just take a slight detour and go another direction. There are too many

other influences worth seeking out to stay eternally buried in the past. But to me that music still defines me, it's not going anywhere.

MRR: The Oath lyrics on the first 7", especially "a carefully thought out bad idea" and "colostomy grab bag" are dealing with your relation to the scene through the lens of your success in Charles Bronson. What is your view of the legacy towards that band? You seem to be trying to separate from something that meant a lot to a lot of people.

Mark: I loved Charles Bronson, but for the most part I really am unaware to any kind of "legacy" it had, and I want to keep it that way. Sometimes people will ask me about it or tell me what it meant to them and it always comes as a shock that this long after the fact anyone would still care. But it really pleases me, I mean when I saw some guy standing next to Ozzy Osbourne on mtv wearing a Charles Bronson shirt in plain view for ten seconds and I was freaking out. But really, there's now way that we could've functioned any more longer than we did, it lived it's proper lifespan, I respect it in its grave. Why go backwards? When you say "separate," I don't know what you mean. what should I do? get it back together? Start another band just like it? That sounds like a nightmare! (Editor: I guess what I meant was exactly what Mark says, the need to do something new, ex: how different the Oath are in sound and subject matter...but still they are unfortunately an "ex members" band.)

MRR: The new 9/10" certainly had a problematic reception, what with the Ebullition controversy and a perceived "attitude" or arrogance that seems to have unsettled a lot of the 'kids.' I would postulate that the lack of "typical" hardcore topics in the lyrics, as well as the insert, are a) part of a larger point or motivation behind the band, and b) not really acceptable to the p-kids at the moment. Whereas a band like Limp Wrist is allowed to break down barriers to raise awareness about hypocrisy in the scene, it seems the reaction to the Oath is very hypocritical and contradictory right, as people ask what diy punk is going to mean and do they want it to include ALL viewpoints. If there is a question in here, please answer it.

Mark: Did LimpWrist really change anything? To me it's a prepackaged problem and solution all in itself, like most hardcore records in the last ten years. Who're they saving? It's no test of the real world, it's limited and confining. I think those lyrics are just a celebration of being gay and proud, that's fine with me but it's a topic I couldn't see being interesting for very long. I say this because I knew people would eat that shit up immediately, and the band's good at what they do, but it's an idea that's gimmicky and lacks resonance.

MRR: What do you think is left to be accomplished with this band? Do you see an evolution of sound the way Charles Bronson did, or is The Oath going to be *one* sound and then you will form something else for another sound?

Mark: What does any band set out to accomplish? I have no idea. You just exist for a desired amount of time and break up when it feels right....realistically we'll never probably develop into what we could've been but I think what we have to show for now has its charms. We have a lot of ideas but it's really hard to make the time to see them through. That's unfortunate, but at the same time I cherish it for what it is. i think when we're done I'll be more than satisfied with The Oath.

MRR: What's the deal with the other bands you've been in since xCBx disbanded? Can you give a synopsis of what Holy Molar, Nazti Skinz, and Virgin MegaWhore are all about?

Mark: I just wanted to do different projects with my friends...HM was just guys from San Diego and one from Portland where we knew something good would come out of it considering the abilities of all the people involved. I really think those guys are great music makers....but like The Oath we were always really pressed for time. We were supposed to do a few shows and then the guitarist's sister died and it was really awful so we never played. VMW is my friend Jeff (ed: Jeff Jelen, also of the Youth Attack CHARLES BRONSON record), who I think is the best songwriter since Lou Reed. Jeff can do everything almost effortlessly...and the Nazti Skinz, well, I didn't play in that band, I just put out their record, but they were genius on so many levels. it was perfectly calculated indifference. They started the thing with the full intention of only doing six songs ,five shows, and a record nobody would ever find. It was like a super-condensed version of the over-indulgent lifespans of most bad bands who ignore the call to die way past their expiration dates. Nazti Skinz were all about undercutting expectations, and after seeing their record review, I see they acheived exactly what they set out to do. Bands like them are the future. No time for posturing, for building cheeseball egos, just making an impact and getting the fuck out.

MRR: It is evident from a quick perusal of the Oath lyrics, and something not really present in Charles Bronson, that you have an awareness about the process of aging and redefinition of values with time. This is actually pretty moving. Along with the idea of repression and self-imposed inaction, i see this question of identity as central to the Oath. How do you see the evolution of identity, especially when a lot of kids think they are full-formed at the age of 18?

Mark: With Bronson, I was fearful of age, I hated the thought of the future, now I embrace it, and I try to step outside of my own confines and broaden myself...whatever that means. I knew at twenty that I would know nothing more at twenty six. So in many ways I was right, age happens too quickly to absorb what you think you need, instead you just feel days out and take it as it comes, blindly.

MRR: What is the spoken word 7" gonna be like, and do you have any other projects on the table right now?

Mark: It'll be good and stupid, a guaranteed one listen. I spoke the whole thing in Czech. But I don't want to give it away because Nate's afraid of having to get rid of a thousand of the things as it is.

MRR: Bolt Thrower or Carcass?

Mark: Fucking Carcass! but only the first two...however the second Bolt Thrower rips. Monster x was a Bolt Thrower rip off, did you know that? I wonder if people realize that.

MRR: The art in the now-infamous insert, I'm assuming it to be all your own art. When I was at PS1 in New York, I saw this exhibit called 'the short century' featuring works by Ghada Amer, an egyptian artist, that I found highly reminiscent of the booklet art. Not to be a big dork, but what is your art all about, and am I way off with this Ghada Amer thing? I like to imagine that it relates to issues of repressed sexual identity as well as having a shock value that is rare in these days and esp. in the desensitized p-scene. Discuss.

Mark: Yeah. I did all those images. Much of my work revolves around reversing sexual expectations and gender roles and questioning the placement of sexual identity as a logo or idea in alliance with culture. I feel we as people are infinitely curious of nature but will never really explain it, it is too immense and unfathomable so instead we carry around presumptuous explanations and labels for ourselves as if they were on ready-made cue cards. I think the punk scene is too cocky and totally unaware that in reality it knows nothing, its whole foundation seems to exist to play off the status quo but it remains merely on these surface levels of rebellion. Rebellion for it's own sake. it's more of a protective guise to latch onto. I'm way more interested in the individual, not the group or scene. I love talking about sex, I always love to hear people's stories and opinions, but setting up parameters and definitions is where I get nervous. Yet talk's about the only thing I feel I can offer anyone, just dialogue about all these issues. So many people want to be told that "You are this, and this is the way these people are." That's such bullshit, what about just opening your eyes? Maybe my views on sex are totally fucked up but they are at least real...because they are unanswerable. Everything I think I know about it, I go back on. Solutions and answers just hang above me, dangling on fishing lines just out of reach. That's a really humbling thought.

MRR: What are you listening to right now? (Please don't say Jazz).

Mark: Lots of Beherit.

MRR: Any final comments?

Mark: Keith Richards deserves all the credit.

MRR: Thanks to Mark for the interview, and the rest of the band for making great music. anyone can reach me about my zine at voiceswakeuszine@hotmail.com

RIOT 99

Riot 99 play great anthemic '77 style punk and oi. They have a self-released EP called Destroy the City. The Faux British accent of lead singer Drew leaps immediately out at you, but then you realize he is not faking it. He is Australian and used to sing in Compound Fracture, as well as another band from Sydney called Stanley Knife. Taras, the drummer, is originally from Edmonton and played in the Glory Stompers and the Systematics and ran a street punk label called Disturbance Records. Their new guitar player, Andy, plays in a local chaos punk band called the Class. And Jim is from the garage scene and now plays bass in the band. They joined us live at our radio show, Equalizing-X-Distort, on March 3rd to catch us up on recent developments. Interview by Stephe Perry.

MRR: Can you tell us what bands you have been in prior to Riot 99, or that you're currently in?

Drew: In Australia, I was in a band called Compound Fracture, Com Frac, for short. It was like a straight out oi band. And then Stanley Knife. And now Riot 99 here in Canada.

Jim: I played with Kim Mitchell from about '81-'86 and then joined April Wine from about '87 till '92, and from '92 on I have been working with various acts—Peabo Bryson, Ambrosia—they are sort of a prog rock side fusion thing I am doing and then I just recently joined Riot 99 (lots of laughter).

Drew: And he was the band bike for Lynryd Skynyrd.

Taras: I was in the Glory Stompers in Edmonton and before that it was RCMP (Rednecks Cause My Problems) and after the Glory Stompers was the Systematics, also in Edmonton, and then here in Toronto I was in the Blatherskites. And now Riot 99.

Andy: I am currently playing in the notorious punk rock outfit The Class. Taras, Jim, and Drew: Notorious! (All together with lots of laughter).

MRR: How did Riot 99 form? Who met who? Who got brought in and at what times?

Drew: I met Taras in the men-only Sauna on Bathurst Street. No, actually I came over here in '98 and I wanted to start up a band. I thought up the name and I knew Taras from a compilation that both our bands were on (*Oi it's Streetpunk Vol 2.—Helen of Oi!*) and from the address on the CD I found out he lived around the corner from me in Kensington Market. We got together and tried to find other members. It took us a year before we got Howard and Nathalie on bass and guitar, and then they quit and we got these two wankers here to fill in and the rest, you know.

MRR: What was the initial idea behind starting Riot 99 in terms of the kind of band you wanted to start?

Jim: Well, we were really interested in beginning a neo-fascist hate rock outfit, but unfortunately that music just isn't quite popular with the kids these days, so we decided to go into the funk and it's taken us where we are now. (laughter)

Drew: I just wanted to do a straight-out street punk oi band. No bullshit, no mess, no fuss, just pure impact.

Andy: So you can see that there is a little conflict between James and Drew here. They kind of have artistic preferences clashing.

Drew: You mean differences...There's a lot of inner artistic pain, it keeps me up at night.

Jim: Pure rock 'n' roll.

Drew: Maximum rock 'n' roll

Taras: I wanted to start a metal band, but Drew convinced me to start this band.

Drew: Ah fuck. You and your goddamned metal.

MRR: How has the band changed with the new line-up?

Jim: Well we are so much more fuckin' better. More better ya know?

Andy: I think musically we are a little harder. In terms of the old songs I do try and mimic Howard's guitar parts because those songs are already set in stone. As for the new songs, I think it is a little bit more of a harder sound. James is pure rock 'n roll, so...

Drew: ...that guy is pure cock 'n' balls.

Andy: ...but yeah, I add a little harder drive to it. I am not particularly influenced by the Clash like Howard was. I pale in comparison to his guitar playing, but hopefully the sound is...

Jim: Don't be modest, you are much better than he is...

Andy: Yeah okay, Ter? (laughter)

Taras: You are a damn fine guitar player.

Drew: Yeah, he is just being modest—the cunt is a virtuoso.

Andy: I'm not putting myself down, I know I rock.

Drew: He is fuckin' ace.

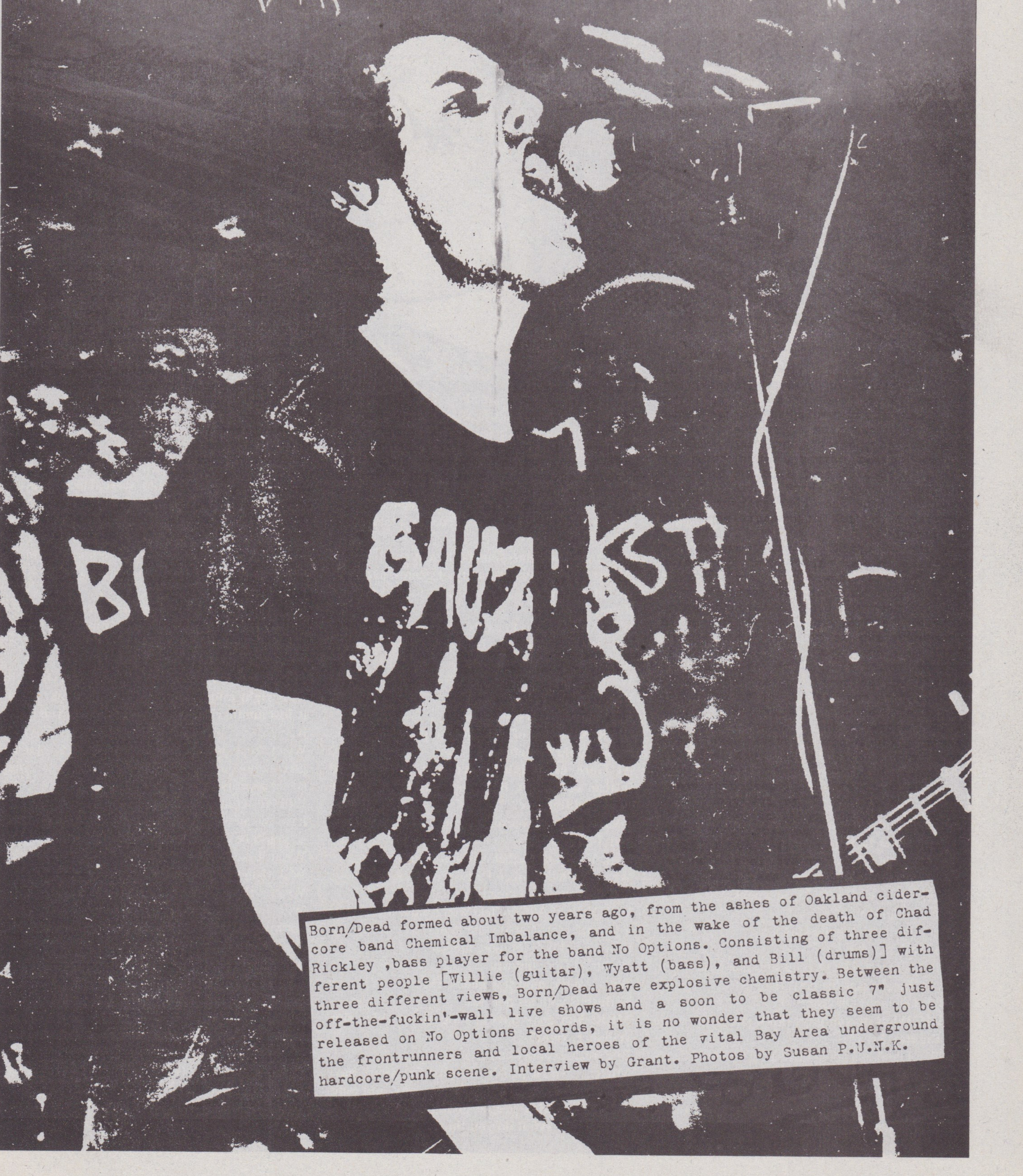
MRR: Where did the name Riot 99 come from, and does the name have a story or any significance to it?

Drew: I got the idea from a song by the Violators called "Summer of '81," which is one of my favorite

songs, and in the chorus they go "Riot, Riot..." and say the name of a city and it just sounds great. It was 1999 and I just thought Riot 99 sounds like a damn good name.
Taras: Yeah, it was like in 1999 there was that whole thing where everyone was going crazy about the world ending, the apocalypse and all that, and they predicted mass riots everywhere in all the major cities, like in New York and stuff and that's kind of where the name came from.
Drew: And I went down to New York for New Year's Eve 1999 hoping there'd be a fuckin' riot but I missed out and it depressed the hell out of me.
Taras: Everyone was holding hands and singing songs (laughing).
Drew: It was fucked. There was a ripple around 11:30 pm in Times Square and one or two minor incidents but that was it.
Jim: Plus the name El Debarge was already taken.
MRR: Who do you consider influences for the Riot 99 sound?
Taras: We all have different personal influences.
MRR: Sure but what contributes to the band's sound?
Drew: Blitz, Violators, GBH, Last Resort, Infa Riot...
Taras: It would be all early oi stuff like No Future releases and '77 punk stuff like the Clash.
Jim: Stiff Little Fingers.
Taras: The Jam, the Boys, the Damned, Menace, Slaughter & The Dogs, Cock Sparrer, New York Dolls, the Dead Boys, Sham 69, old Skrewdriver—pre-racial crap—is great rock 'n' roll. Just a mix of late 70s punk and early 80s oi, mostly. But we're all into AC/DC and Rose Tattoo and stuff like that too, and the Saints, so basically we're like an Australian punk rock 'n' roll band, ha, ha.
Drew: British.
Taras: We're a rock 'n' roll influenced punk band, no we're a punk influenced rock 'n' roll band!
Andy: I think it definitely does lean towards the '77 stuff a little bit more.
Drew: UK '82. No American influences whatsoever.
Jim: ....except for the Ramones, obviously.
Drew: I don't have that many American influences.
Taras: Motley Crue. (laughter)
Andy: That's the shame of the band.
Taras: Nobody else likes 80s metal except for me. (laughing)
Jim: Hey!
Taras: OK, James likes it too. James is my metal buddy (laughter).
Drew: They are the epitome of shit, I can't believe you like those LA fuckwits.
MRR: On the note of outside influences, both Taras and Drew grew up in scenes outside of Toronto. Can you tell me about those scenes and how growing up in Australia or Edmonton, how that might have impacted on things that come out in Riot 99? the reason I ask is because I don't think there was much of a '77 punk scene here.
Taras: I think we definitely had a different view of things than people here. I think it has a lot to do with being from different places. There seems to be more of a strong hardcore scene here in Toronto, but not really a punk scene. But now there is starting to be a punk scene with Andy's band and us playing. There seems to be a lot of kids getting into that kind of stuff.
Drew: The scene in Australia was very heavily influenced by British punk and it's a fuckin' great scene.
Jim: I came out of the rockabilly scene in this city, which grovels to tourists and old age money. It's just totally boring. There is no rock 'n' roll in it whatsoever. This music you can feel the purity of the rock 'n' roll influence in it and that's why I'm here.
Taras: We are just raw rock 'n' roll, basically.
Drew: Raw power.
Andy: I think, well for me personally, I am into the whole studs and leather charged chaos punk...
Drew: Bondage.
Andy: Yep, bondage, all the way, up the bondage....
Drew: Buttplugs, lubricants, strap-ons.
Andy: ....but when it comes to playing in Riot 99, I am heavily influenced by bands like Social Distortion, Stiff Little Fingers all the sort of '77 bands more rock 'n' roll influenced, so I can fuse that. I can play in two different bands and sound completely different and I think that's pretty cool.
Taras: I listen to a lot of different things, but my past influences for my other bands were usually early 80s British stuff and early 80s stuff from the States, like the *Boston not LA* period, or early DC stuff as well as early California stuff like BYO and the Mystic comps. I also listen to reggae and soul and rockabilly and psychobilly and garage trash and marching music and tons of stuff so it all really influences you. I grew up on 50s rock 'n' roll from my dad. Anyway, I guess what I am trying to say here is, in my old bands our influences were much more focused, in this band my personal influences as well as our collective influences are coming from everywhere, and they all come together somehow to create this...even though we may not all totally like what each other likes. Right Drew?
Drew: For me the epitome of punk rock is the early to mid 80s British punk. The nihilistic, self-destruct, Thatcher-era, *No Future* style of punk rock. That is my favorite style of music.
MRR: I want to move from influences to sound. A slight subtle difference here. Some of the people who will be reading this material won't have had a chance to hear you. Can you describe your sound for us? What would you say to folks who are from the hardcore scene who may not have heard from you or be familiar with you, what you sound like?
All: Whoooooooooooooooo (one sung note in an atonal voice similar to a test pattern).
MRR: Unfortunately, that is not going to translate into print, so let's try something else. If someone comes up to you and says, oh you're in a band, what do you sound like, what would you tell them?
Jim: It would sound like music that you would want to stick it in to. Music that makes you want to fuck.
Taras: .... or fight. (laughter)
Drew: Music that makes you want to fuckin' destroy. When people come to our show we want them to walk out of there like they have been shot in the chest with an adrenaline bullet....and start smashing public property.
Jim: He's got, he's got....Andy's got a pure 50s rock 'n' roll lead guitar style. It's beautiful, it's excellent. I just play a straight ahead bass. Taras is very technically....he is a technical drummer. He plays very tight. And Drew is just shooting from the throat every time. That's sort of the sound we go for.
Andy: I really never met anybody else in any band who really gives there all, aside from Drew. We played twice on Friday night. Drew, he didn't think he could play the second time and he just totalled his throat—his vocal chords—but he kept doing it. Ter, I can honestly can't say that there is a drummer like Ter. He's got one of the most original styles....
Jim: OK, let's stop kissing each other's asses.
Drew: He is solid.
Taras: Next.
MRR: You released two demos before the EP came out. Can people still get these?
Drew: Oh no, mate. We sold them ages ago.
Taras: No that's just old stuff, we are moving on.
MRR: But you are still doing some of these songs live?
Taras: Oh yeah, we are still doing these songs but we are going to....
Drew: They are going to be on the album, except that song "Guttersnipe." It's fuckin shit.
MRR: You are not going to do that one?
Drew: We haven't done that for a year or two.
MRR: What has the response been to the EP? Do you still have copies left?
Taras: Oh, we have tons of copies left. Nobody seems to want to buy vinyl as much as they used to.
MRR: Do people know about it?
Taras: Yeah, it's just kind of going slowly.
Drew: We spent so much making the fuckin' thing. It was $4.00 wholesale, so to actually send it anywhere we have to do it out of our pockets. We are reluctant to ship off large amounts.
Taras: It was a good idea if we were living in the past, because we really wanted to make a good package and make it look good and make it worth buying because if I saw a record like that I would want to buy it instead of the folded over photocopied paper. But I guess people would just rather buy CDs and in hindsight it was a mistake.
Drew: They can jam it up their assholes for all I care (laughter).
MRR: That was a self release. Are you hoping to release more stuff? You were talking about recording an album.
Drew: Yeah, we're recording an album.
Taras: As soon as we can get some money, which we don't have. We have plans to go into the studio and record a full length, but we are totally broke and we never get paid for shows and we get ripped off and we get shit on....
Drew: ...but we are used to it in this town.
MRR: What happened with MuchMusic? You said you did something with MuchMusic recently.
Jim: We did an interview with MuchMusic on Friday. George Stroumboulopoulos who is....(growing increasingly muffled).
Taras: Hey quit shoving the mic in his mouth.
Drew: Aw, sorry mate (laughing).
MRR: Has that aired yet?
Jim: No he is trying to get a punk show together to coincide with the *Loud* show, which is a metal show on MuchMusic in Canada and so...
Taras: It is going to be used as a pilot for that.
Jim: We did an interview and then they recorded our set.
MRR: If and when you guys do get to record is there other people interested in putting it out or are you going to do it yourself?
Jim: We have had some interest with some labels in Canada and then also transferring into the States so just basically keeping options open.
Andy: Do you want to elaborate on that?
Taras: We are going to be on a compilation soon on Longshot Records, but beyond that....
Jim: There is a compilation from Australia, as well.
Taras: ...but we are just keeping things open right now until we finally record.
MRR: Can you tell me about the comp in BC?
Taras: That was supposed to be a 12" maxi single. So there was going to be three bands from Edmonton and three from here. Actually one of the bands was from Calgary. Anyway, now he is going to expand it to a full length compilation.
MRR: And will it be an oi comp?
Taras: No it's not. He is not pegging it into one category. There is going to be all sorts of bands on this. Just good music.
MRR: What's up with the Australian comp?
Drew: It's called *We're the Blood 2*, and it's put out by a mate of mine in Sydney who runs a label called Snapshot and there is a bunch of real good Australian bands and Sister Mary Rotten Crotch, which is a great name for a band, they are on it as well.
MRR: What songs are on it?
Drew: All the songs we have ever recorded, which is a total of five.
Taras: ... in two years! (laughing)
Drew: Two and a half years.
MRR: In terms of lyrics, what are some of your song titles?
Drew: "Destroy the City," "Start a Riot," "Cancer in Society," "New York City Girl," "Rise Above," "I Just Wanna," "Nun Fucker."
MRR: What are some of the things you take on with your lyrics?

Drew: Fucking Nuns, Cunnilingus...that's a big one, In "Cancer in Society" it is pretty much what we were talking about before...the early to mid 80s British nihilistic No Future punk, fuck-the-system sorta stuff. Just aggressive self-destruct music. The lyrics are pretty much along those lines.
MRR: Can each of you tell me about your favourite Riot 99 song from a lyrical standpoint and why it's your favourite?
Drew: My favourite is "New York City Girl," because it's got good lyrics.
Taras: It's just a good rock 'n' roll song.
Drew: Fuckin' oath mate.
MRR: What's it about?
Drew: It's about a girl from New York City. (lots of laughter) Really though, its mainly about St. Mark's Place and how its a load of fuckin' pretentious shit infested with phony wankers. It's just mainly about snobby New York fuckwits.
MRR: Jim, do you want to try? Your nodding your head in agreement.
Jim: Well I really like "New York City Girl," but just to be different I am going to say "What Are They Fighting For?" I just think that...it is sort of an anti-war song from the narrative of a marine that goes to war. It's just a good song. The lyrics are good, it's sort of an emotional take.
Taras: I think my favourite is "Self Destruct," because it is so raw and it just explodes. I don't know what it sounds like to people outside, but from behind the drums, when I am playing it, what I hear sounds really good. It's vicious....evil!
Andy: Of the songs that I know I would say "New York City Girl." I think that is actually our strongest song right now. That and of course "I Just Wanna."
MRR: Do you know the song "I'm an Upstart" by the Angelic Upstarts? Do you know how that is like the band's informal theme song? Did you write "Start a Riot" to be one of these informal theme songs for Riot 99, or is it just a song encouraging people to take up rebellion?
Taras: I suppose it could be.
Drew: Well it was our first song. It is just a song about "get pissed, destroy," really. That's what that song's about. It's got no real social content except complete anti-social hooliganism.
MRR: The thing is that when I heard it....
Jim: A lot of our songs are sort of anthemic in terms of how they are written. It's great because at shows you have kids that have maybe heard the songs from the last show and the next show they are there and they are singing along to it. It is sort of very similar to Twisted Sister in the 80s with "We're not Gonna Take It."
Drew: Aw Jesus Christ...that's it. Give me the mic, ya fuckin' cunt.
Taras: Yeah alright, now you're talking!
MRR: Last time you guys were here, Drew got into Australian serial killers.
Drew: Oh you mean Chopper Reid. Chop Chop. Criminals not serial killers.
MRR: The only one I know about is Ned Kelly.
Drew: There is Ned Kelly. There is another bloke called Neddy Smith. Chopper Reid, he's my personal favourite. Good ole Chop Chop.
How come he's your favourite?
Drew: Well he got his nickname for....he was an underworld enforcer and he would get criminals, drug dealers, and bank robbers and chop their toes off with bolt cutters until they told him where their stash was and he did that for years. When he was imprisoned he wanted to get into another ward and the warden said "There is no fuckin' way you're going there," so he cut his ears off to get into the infirmary and then he got in that way. He is just a complete nutter, but he is really funny. He has got a real wicked sense of humor, albeit in an ultra-violent kind of way.
Taras: There is a movie about him that came out in Australia, it's really good.
Drew: It's called "Chopper."
Andy: It's actually got a main release now. I just saw it at a local video store.
MRR: Does this curiosity translate into any of your writing?
Drew: In my old band we did a song called Neddy Smith because he was such a legend—we used to play in a pub that was his old hang-out, there were still bullet holes in the basement walls from where they would test out their guns. We also did "Harry May" by the Business, but we changed the lyrics to "Chopper Reid." There were a couple of famous Sydney criminals in our songs as a subject. And just here, I was in a taxi a couple of weeks ago and the driver of the taxi is a writer and he gave me a book called the "Big Red Fox" about the most infamous Toronto bank robber in the 30s called Red Ryan and I am reading the book at the moment. It's fuckin' unreal and I am thinking about writing a song about it.
Taras: And we are also going to do a song on that family....
Drew: The Black Donnellys, yeah. That is a great story. We actually got the lyrics from the old Irish folk song about the Donnellys.
MRR: What are the bands plans for playing out, touring?
Jim: We are going to do a tour in late June early July with the Wednesday Night Heroes from Edmonton across Canada and a couple of Northern American cities, as well.
Taras: If we can get enough money to get a bus together.
MRR: How many weeks is that?
Jim: A couple of weeks.
Andy: Two or three weeks.
Drew: Seven or eight months.
Taras: An extended summer vacation... (laughing)... as in forever!
Andy: We are going to get a tour bus...
Drew: ...and a whole heap of lubricant.
MRR: What do you hope to accomplish as a band, in general?
Taras: Everything!... Playing stadiums.
Drew: I just want a pair of fun-fur lederhosen. That's all I want.
Taras: Don't forget the water wings.
Drew: Water wings and pink cowboy boots and a family size tub of vaseline and some shaving razors.
Jim: Just putting out music you can look at ten years from now and people will still want to listen to.
Drew: That's it. That will stand the test of time.
Andy: Ter has this aspiration to rise upon the stage on a drum riser. It's the one thing...
Taras: It's going to be incredible. (laughing)
Drew: I just want to get an album out.
Taras: At this point that would be great. That would just be really good because it has taken us this long to get here and it would be really really good to get an album out.
MRR: How can people get in touch with Riot 99?
Taras: We have a website and we also have a PO Box, but I will let Drew talk about the website because he does it.
Drew: It is www.Riot99.com. That's an easy one to remember, isn't it kids.
MRR: And what's the mailing address?
Drew: It's in your hot greasy little fist there. Here I'll read it out: Riot 99 c/o Taras O., PO Box 462, 31 Adelaide St. East, Toronto, ON, M5C 2J5 Canada.

BORN/DEAD



Born/Dead formed about two years ago, from the ashes of Oakland cider-core band Chemical Imbalance, and in the wake of the death of Chad Rickley ,bass player for the band No Options. Consisting of three different people [Willie (guitar), Wyatt (bass), and Bill (drums)] with three different views, Born/Dead have explosive chemistry. Between the off-the-fuckin'-wall live shows and a soon to be classic 7" just released on No Options records, it is no wonder that they seem to be the frontrunners and local heroes of the vital Bay Area underground hardcore/punk scene. Interview by Grant. Photos by Susan P.U.N.K.

MRR: Alright, so how'd you guys get together?
Bill: That's a long story.
Will: Okay, uh… Chemical Imbalance broke up.
Bill: Willie and I had been talking about being in a band for a while before that.
Will: Yeah. And we called each other up one day, and we were just like, "What are you doing?" Then we told each other what we wanted to do, which was 80's hardcore, but it never really worked out that way…
Wyatt: (laughs) Yeah.
Bill: (laughs) Yeah, short quick songs, we've got two of those…
MRR: So that's it, then?
Bill: Basically.
Will: (laughs) And Wyatt wasn't doing anything, so…
Wyatt: Yeah, that and I had the practice space.
Will: Right.
Bill: And I wanted to be in a band with Wyatt again too, because we had kind of a chemistry going.
MRR: You see eye to eye?
Bill: Yeah. (laughs)
MRR: You guys just got back from touring with Phalanx and Kontraklasse. What was that like?
Wyatt: It was fucking awesome!
Will: Tijuana rules.
Bill: Tijuana fucking rules.
Wyatt: Oh yeah. Up the Tijuana punks!
Bill: Seattle, too.
Wyatt: Portland dogpile kids.
Bill: Yeah, no shit.
Will: There was a lot of good stuff that went into it.
Wyatt: Eureka was the best! (laughs)
Will: (laughing) Oh yeah!
MRR: What do you guys think about the scene in the Bay Area?
Willie: I think it's good, there are a lot of rad bands coming up.
Bill: It's gotten a lot better since I first came out here. There wasn't really shit going on back then.
MRR: When was that?
Bill:Like '95, '96… something like that. I mean, there were a few bands here and there, but everybody really sucked. It was really generic, crappy shit; there wasn't really much hardcore/punk around at all.
Will: It seems like it's on an upward trend right now. A lot of the bands are getting better, they're starting to get material out… There's a lot of variety, too.
Bill: Yeah, the bands sound different now!
Wyatt: There's a wide variety of genres, and there are all-ages places to play now, too, like Burnt Ramen…
Will: And Mission Records.
Bill: Burnt Ramen has been key in bringing the scene back up, for sure.
Wyatt: Definitely.
Will: That, and George Bush.
Bill: (laughs) War always helps…
MRR: Speaking of that, do you guys think anything would be better if Al Gore or Ralph Nader had been elected instead of George Bush, or would it not have made a difference?
Wyatt: Nader for president would have been cool.
Bill: I have no idea.
Will: Yeah, I think that it would be different…
Wyatt: With the Green Party, it'd be the same.
Bill: I got my own green party!
Will: Yeah, if Al Gore had won I think it would be a lot different. Not for the better necessarily, but there would be a lot more hidden…
Wyatt: Al Gore did win.
Will: …more hidden agendas. He's not as blatant as Bush is with his policies.
MRR: You guys have a song about video surveillance, right?
Bill: Yeah, security cameras.
MRR: …which just in the past few years have become more prevalent in our society, and especially now, with people giving up their rights voluntarily. What do you think about that?
Wyatt: I think it's fucking scary, man.
Will: Yeah, it's really scary.
Wyatt: 1984 is actually happening but it's fucking 2002.
Will: Just today I was driving on the freeway and I realized that there's photo surveillance at every single exit when you come off the freeway, and at all the lights to try to catch you and give you a ticket… And who knows what else.
Wyatt: Every two miles they have a video camera just pointing down at traffic to… to what? Who fuckin' knows?
MRR: I read in the paper that they might raise the bridge toll to seven dollars, but if you have a fast-trak it'll to stay at four.
Willie: Seven?! That's such bullshit.
MRR: So it'll basically make it so everybody in their right mind would get the fast-trak, which is just another way of keeping tabs on you, really.
Wyatt: Yeah, totally. Because you have to sign up, give them your license plate number and shit, your social security number.
Will: Yesterday I was reading in the paper that they have this new chip that they can put in your tooth so you'll be able to hear your cell phone and…
Wyatt: Like in *Real Genius*.
Will: (laughs) Yeah, exactly.
Wyatt: "Hello Kent, this is God!" (laughs)
Will: Imagine the possibilities of what they could do with that. I was watching this talk show the other day and they had a guy that was selling tracking devices for kids—you get them installed in your kids' wrists or arms—
Wyatt: What the fuck!
Bill: That's crazy.
Will: Yeah, and you can also get them for teenagers, so you can know where your teen is going at all times. If they're on a date, or something…
Wyatt: That's some *Running Man* shit.
MRR: They're going to start a system at the air-

port for frequent travelers where if you've never been convicted of a felony and if you meet certain criteria, you can buy a card that you just swipe, so you don't have to wait in all the lines and submit to a search. So now not only are they not searching the rich, who really commit the crimes (it'll cost a shitload to get the card), it's also another case of people giving up privacy for convenience.

Bill: I heard a while ago that they're starting a thing over in Europe where they have some kind of eye/retina scanner already put into place… I think things are the same right now as they were in the 50's, but in the 50's we were all way more naïve. I mean, things aren't exactly the same—it's way more extreme now. Back then we were more concerned with the American dream, whereas now no one gives a shit as long as they're not affected

MRR: Do you think that the punk scene has felt, or will feel any pressure in the future from bills like the new "Homeland Security" act?

Wyatt: Possibly. I think a lot of that shit is kept underground right now.

Will: They choose to ignore it.

Wyatt: They just take it as a tongue-in-cheek type of thing. They don't really think that all these kids would actually fuckin' rise up and go fuckin' rip them out of their houses and burn them on their fuckin' front lawns, you know?

Will: I think a lot of kids are becoming more aware just because the climate is so violent.

Wyatt: And with the internet, you can easily find websites that display other points of view than the biased leaders' and the media's.

Bill: I think things are a lot better now, as far as punk goes, than when we first started out. Now it's way easier to rent a hall than back in the day. Then it was really fuckin' hard—you had to go to the city, and it was kind of hard to explain to the city with a blue mohawk that you just wanted to play a peaceful show.

Wyatt: Those kids were probably listening to Green Day, and crap like that. There's not really any outlandish things being spoken out against the government. Maybe little things here and there, but nothing too extreme is being said in that pop-punk bullshit.

MRR: It seems almost everyday I see more "punk" influences in the main stream. The corporate music press now cites the Ramones, the Clash, and Motorhead as bands who revolutionized and changed music, and the Warped Tour gets bigger every year. Do you think that's positive or negative?

Wyatt: *Fuck that shit.*

Bill: Negative.

Will: Definitely negative.

Bill: I think it's funny. I can't believe some of the bands that are on that fuckin' tour.

Wyatt: It's *all* bullshit.

Bill: Corporations trying to take over again.

Will: It's sad, it de-legitimizes the scene. It's mass-produced "punk for the masses," and in the production it loses all the heart and soul.

Bill: You get a bunch of kids showing up who don't know shit.

Will: Not that that's a bad thing…

Bill: Well, it could be good, but most of the bands playing don't stand for shit.

Will: I read in an interview with one of the bands on the Warped Tour, and they say they're non-political. But I don't see how you can be non-political. Everything involves politics, *life* involves politics.

MRR: Playing the Warped Tour and getting paid large sums of money involves politics.

Will: *(laughs)*.. Yeah... the *wrong* politics.

MRR: If there was a war, and the draft was reinstated, what would you do?

Will: Burn my draft card and go to Canada.

Wyatt: I never filled out my draft card.

Bill: Me neither.

Will: Bill's over the age limit. (everyone laughs)

Bill: No shit, I'm too old.

Wyatt: And you got a lazy eye. (everyone laughs)

Will : I have flat feet, and my back hurts too.

MRR: Reading your lyrics, I get the feeling that you have a problem with the world. Do you think that problem can be fixed?

Will: I think that we all have a problem with the world, we just have different ideas on the ways the problem could be solved.

MRR: And those are?

Bill: Mine is destruction. I don't have any hope or faith in humanity.

Will: I have hope, but it's a fleeting hope. People could really benefit from their lives if they would just wake up and acknowledge their actions. Be cool to each other, instead of stabbing each other in the back.

Wyatt: Not be so fucking self-centered.

Bill: Our song "Indignant" explains the way I feel about that. It's kind of hard to concern yourself with the world's problems when you're living on the street, and you gotta defend yourself on that street.

MRR: What's No Options records all about?

Will: No Options records started after the band No Options broke up because Chad died. Aaron Jones and I have known each other for about 8 years. We always liked the same type of music and wanted to start a label to help put out good music by good bands who weren't getting exposure. D.I.Y. ethic, of course. We also thought it would be a good tribute to our friend Chad, because he loved music.

MRR: You guys play a lot of shows, which one stands out as the best?

Will: Tijuana squat.

Bill: Yeah, that was fuckin' cool. Also the show at Burnt Ramen on tour was amazing. It was the first time we had a pit for our entire set, it was crazy. Also the Molotov's shows are always a blast.

Will: A lot of our shows at Burnt Ramen have been a lot of fun. The one with Skarp and Bread and Water was really fun. We meet so many cool bands from all over the country, it's fun every time we play. Tijuana was way cool though, with Kontraklasse, Phalanx, No Hope and Bumbklaat.

MRR: Who is your favorite Bay Area band of all time?

Will Crucifix.

Bill: Shit, we can go back pretty far.

Wyatt: Jefferson Starship?

Bill: Fang, Sick Pleasure.

Will: Neurosis.

Bill: So many… Fuck Ups, Christ on Parade.

Wyatt: Deface.

Bill: Deface would be fuckin' killer if they got their shit together. Put that in the interview!

MRR: Do you guys have any plans for a full-length or U.S. tour?

Will: We're recording in October at House Of Faith and planning on a U.S tour next spring or summer. Hopefully Europe if we can get the money.

MRR: Anything else?

Will: You can get our 7" if you write us. And I think people from around the scene should keep in better contact with each other.

Wyatt: So send me stuff…(laughs)

Bill: I want to thank all the bands who supported us and helped us out, both on tour and locally. Everywhere we played we got hooked up and everyone was really cool.

Will: Except Eureka.

Wyatt: Keep sk8ing.

Bill: Go to Burnt Ramen, it's only two blocks from BART. It's better than Gilman.

Will: Gilman is cool too.

Bill: Yeah.

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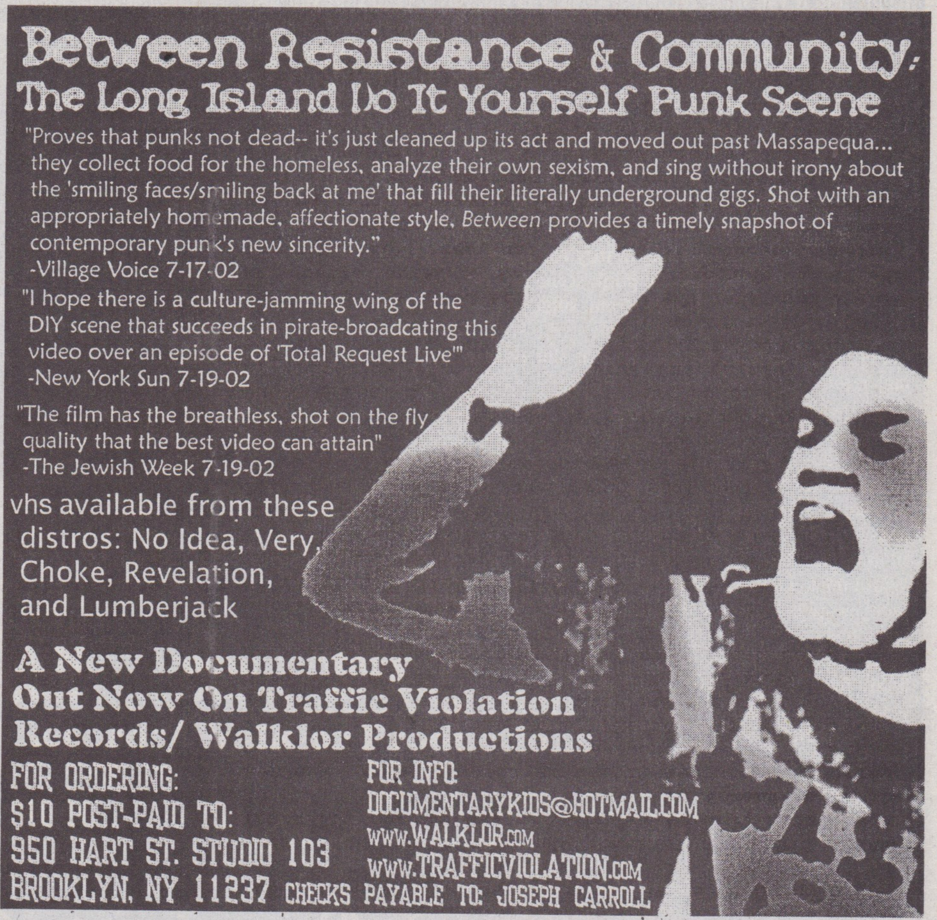
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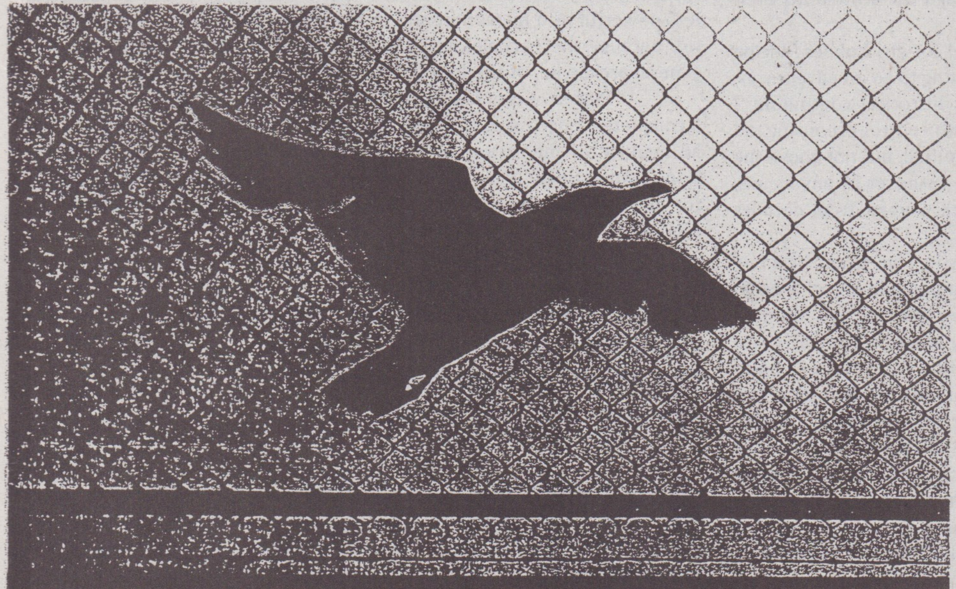

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BOOKS

Sister Of The Road: The Autobiography of Boxcar Bertha • Dr. Ben Reitman
205 pages • $15.00
Nabat/AK Press • 674 A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA • 94612

Boxcar Bertha has been de rigueur reading among young punk rock hobo girls for ten years or more, and of course I read it too. I had a well-worn copy that I got from a girl named Allessandra. I must have passed it on to someone else, because I haven't got it now. But seems like every girl was either waiting for it or giving it to someone else. I remember its fresh, matter-of-fact style—just the life story of a curious, intelligent, anarchist hobo gal in the 1930s, one adventure after another, almost like a litany. Then at the end comes some vaguely domesticated resolution that most people just glossed over, having primarily absorbed the adventurous parts. The book's attribution was "as told to Dr. Ben Reitman," though the scuttlebutt even then was that he really wrote it.

As patron saint and cardinal role model for girl hoboes, Bertha is unparalleled. Not like we need too much prompting to go on adventures, but there was always something cool about this historical continuum. I mean, Bertha was a free love, commune-living, birth control-espousing, no shit-taking young woman of the highest order. Dignified, but not above the occasional drunken binge, generous to all, but no pushover by any means, a thoroughly tough, completely modern punk rock woman, from decades ago.

Now that AK Press has reissued this classic, I am struck by a few things. Namely that Bertha has sex with an enormous number of men in this book! I mean, starting from chapter two, there must be two hundred sex affairs here. I don't think this is particularly shocking, but as I was rereading, I was giving more thought to the possibility that she was a political creation, a metaphor rather than a real person, for the first time. Her nonplussed one-adventure-after-another writing style seemed, on this reading, more the product of a rough draft and a checklist than a stream of consciousness memoir. Maybe it was the critical distance of rereading the book again, some six years after I last read it, but there was serious doubt being cast on the old "as told to" schtick this time around.

Then, after I reread and remembered that domesticated ending again (where Bertha has an epiphany about all roads leading to motherhood), I read this edition's new afterword. Sure enough, it was no accident that the cover now reads simply "Dr. Ben Reitman." The cat's out of the bag—there was no Boxcar Bertha. Reitman wrote the novel, fair and square. Reitman was a gynecologist, an anarchist, a political agitator, and a hobo, and he compiled this fiction, as rumor suspected, out of an amalgam of women he knew on the road in the 30s.

What's new is the revelation that Reitman was as much of an adventurer as Bertha, and likely drew most of Bertha's hi-jinks from his own life story. He wasn't just some armchair confessor, as I had thought. He was out hoboing and getting thrown in the pokey with all the other lefties. He founded the Chicago branch of the Hobo College (to which a great deal of space is devoted in the story, but I still have a hard time visualizing...I think it was like a drop-in center of some kind?) and was Emma Goldman's lover for many years. He was also an ardent proselytizer on birth control and abortion rights (which landed him in jail on numerous occasions) and promoter of safe sex, of all things. Which all points to Bertha's metaphorized adventures, with her dalliance in prostitution, her pregnancy, and her contracting syphilis—Reitman wouldn't have passed up an opportunity to make his points on these issues, so she had to be written this way.

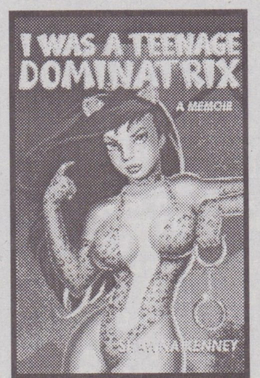
It also explains her multitude of sex partners. The desired point, for Reitman, was free, uncoerced love, among equals, and without the state's intervention. So Bertha, the character, must establish her devotion to men and act it out. That finally makes sense, because it always seemed curious to me that Bertha wouldn't keep a little more to herself. I mean, she just seemed, at times, emotionally overextended in the book, in a way that didn't match her common sense approach to her organizing and activist endeavors.

So the real question is, does it change anything to know that Boxcar Bertha was a fictional character? That the life story of one of the most heroically liberated ladies in history was the product of a man with an agenda? In a way, I think so. Even with the prior suspicions, I experienced a sense of disappointment to have it verified. It's almost as if she were too good to be true. (Sigh.)

But this vague sense of loss is balanced somewhat by the idea that there was a cool anarchist guy who so convincingly imagined a rad woman out of the women all around him. I think Bertha is, ultimately, no less powerful as a metaphor, and in some ways maybe even more powerful, because she becomes less the exceptional individual, and more the general archetype, of the heroic ladies who must have abounded.

Sister of the Road: the Autobiography of Boxcar Bertha remains a completely engrossing snapshot of radical life in the 1930s, populated by all manner of interesting underground personalities and harsh tribulations. And fictional or no, Bertha remains a totally inspirational character, for her clear-headed and inquisitive embrace of all the wild experiences life on the road has to offer her. —Greta S.

I Was a Teenage Dominatrix • Shawna Kenney
124 pages • $14.95
Last Gasp • 777 Florida Street
San Francisco, CA • 94110



If you're kinky, you won't be able to resist this book. And if you're not, you'll be tempted to read it anyway, for the same reason Jerry Springer tempts you into watching his show every day. Even if you're not in the slightest bit kinky, you'll be tempted. How could you not? Put a picture of a sex kitten holding a pair of handcuffs on the cover of a book titled *I Was a Teenage Dominatrix*, and you've got a great l'il package that begs to be picked up, taken home, and devoured in one sitting. Which you will. It's a fast read, quick paced and quick witted, with just enough detail to make some smile and others wince. But like the proverbial afternoon quickie, it's also a little bit too brief, a little too shallow, and leaves you feeling a little bit unsatisfied.

I Was A Teenage Dominatrix is a "tell-all" style memoir of Shawna Kenney: college student by day, professional dominatrix by night. It's fun to read, but presents only a superficial view of Bondage & Domination and Sado-Masochism (BDSM). Missing is any information and/or background about the important psychological, emotional and/or erotic factors underlying BDSM. Kenney also fails to differentiate between those who practice BDSM for pay verses those who consider BDSM their lifestyle. This is basically the tale of a young opportunist who got into domination-for-hire as a pragmatic way to make money to get through college. Completely ignorant to the world of BDSM, Kenney had no training, no connection to the SM community, no empathy for her clients and really, no desire to do the work at all. She was in it just for the bucks.

Kenney spares no detail in relating her adventures as Mistress Alexis. Because of her explicitness, she assumes that the reader is familiar or at least semi-comfortable with sex work and the idea of consensual domination and submission. But you never get the impression that Kenney is comfortable with the idea herself. Kenney distances herself from other sex workers, stating that the work she does is about power, education, ritual—therapy, even—almost anything but sex. While she does not have what she considers to be "sex" with her clients, there's no doubt that most of her clients saw their sessions as erotic experiences. But having sex would make her a prostitute and unlike professional domination, prostitution is bad.

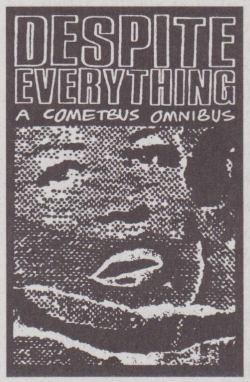
"Plus she liked the fact that I never allowed any physical contact. I never touched any of them. Never allowed them to kiss my ass or be smothered by my breasts for body worship. Never even spanked them bare-handed. I wore surgical gloves for every session. I just couldn't stand the thought of a stranger, someone I didn't love, touching me, but Miranda approved because she knew we couldn't get her busted for prostitution."

Kenney also makes it quite clear that she became a sex worker, not by choice, but out of necessity. "School costs money, and freedom has its price. I decided I had to create my own 'financial aid', and one day, while flipping thought the sleazy ads in the weekly city paper, I wondered if I could ever - gulp- be an exotic dancer." Even choosing to become a dominatrix (as opposed to -gulp- an exotic dancer...) wasn't a conscious choice, but an idea she accidentally stumbled upon while playing dress-up for Halloween. "I hadn't decided what to wear for the Halloween party we were all going to that night, so I thought maybe I'd dress as a dominatrix. It sounded so sexy and mysterious. I was a hit! For the first time in my life I was not a tomboy or somebody's buddy or worrying about my weight or bills or anything. I was drunk on power and sex appeal. I started thinking that maybe girls were not wimps. And maybe all men didn't like them that way. I started thinking maybe I could do this."

Regardless of how she may have felt about working in the sex industry, she does acknowledge that she emerged not only emotionally sound, but richer both monetarily and through experience gained. She gained self confidence, self respect and the knowledge that she has what it takes to make it in this world. "Now I know the power of being a woman... I'm lucky because I got to experience what I've always felt every woman deserves - love, adoration, worship, confidence, respect."

Hopefully *I Was a Teenage Dominatrix* will not be seen as the definitive guide into the world of BDSM. Professional dominants are only one aspect of the scene. For those unacquainted vith world of BDSM and/or sex work, enjoy the book but realize that this is simply one woman's personal exploration into the world of professional domination. While her experience is not totally atypical, it's not quite the norm either. But it does supply all the sensational aspects and titillating tidbits that tend to get missed in the more theoretical or "how-to" books on BDSM. Kenney did a reasonable job of describing the types of scenes many professional dominants do, the range of clients she saw and their many fetishes, while never letting us forget that although there are many different reasons women choose to become professional dominatrices, the main motivation for this particular one was purely monetary. —Catherine Cook

Despite Everything: A Cometbus Omnibus
Aaron Elliot
$14.95 • 608 pages
Last Gasp • 777 Florida Street, San Francisco, CA • 94110



Cometbus fanzine is a zine that begat a thousand other zines, all over-caffeinated, hand-lettered personal zines about hangin' out, going to shows, and going on road trips. Like most archetypes, *Cometbus* is infinitely better than its imitators.

The zine's main writer and guiding force is Aaron "Cometbus" Elliot. His distinct handwriting and manipulated xerox machine graphics set the standard for American personal zines almost impossibly high. His witty and somewhat rambling writing style is unmistakable and unique. Each issue of this zine is snapped up and disappears once the press run is completed, save for a few, sporadic reprints and occasional international versions. There are packs of rabid *Cometbus* fans trying to track down all of the issues, but I think this book won't satiate most of those completist yahoos since there are incomplete issues reprinted here, including most of the first few years of *Cometbus*. The rest of us, who aren't still living at home with tons of time and fat Paypal accounts on eBay, should be quite happy with this large volume.

The reader should thank Aaron for cutting a ton of dreck from the book—especially from the earlier issues which were mostly concentrated on the very local East Bay punk scene of the early to mid 1980s. A punk zine's a punk zine, and *Cometbus* only really took off once Aaron and his ever-rotating gang of contributors consciously departed from the letters/band interviews/record reviews punk zine template. Like its brother zine *Absolutely Zippo*, *Cometbus* made an effort to break out of the mold struck by more "pro" California punk zines like Flipside and *MaximumRocknRoll*. Both *Zippo* and *Cometbus* succeeded more often than they stumbled.

People have a tendency to just hype *Cometbus* up and never critique it. That doesn't do anyone any good, the stumbles that *Cometbus* took include the vinyl 12" record issue and the recent "Back To The Land" issue. The former took Aaron's infamous fetish with obscurity to an unlistenable extreme: a badly-recorded full-length of an unknown writer reading his book into a microphone. The latter stumble runs with a theme that has a logical connection to a lot of the underpinnings of the punk scene (DIY, independence, using direct action to stop our planet's destruction, living one's ethics, etc.) but isn't what I (or a lot of us) pick up *Cometbus* for. If I want to read about organic gardening or back-to-the-land movements, I'll pick up *Slug And Lettuce* or *Profane Existence* or *Green Anarchy*, because those zines are expert on these topics. As it happens, neither issue is excerpted here, although the 12" record (issue 45) is briefly mentioned.

Aaron's love of obscurity tends to lend his writing an "in-crowd" aura that would be fatal except that his writing is so specifically not exclusionary in its tone and its overall themes. His obscurity fetish has its good points as well, mostly related to the nicknames he gives to, well, everyone, in his later writings—including what I think is his high point, the not-so-fictional novella "Double Duce." It also allows the reader to step back from the specific people or bands he's writing about and absorb the story without getting distracted by actu-

al people or bands. Even if the reader does know who he's talking about in real life, the literary distance given by the nicknames keep the story seamless.

The only other flaw in *Cometbus* as a whole is its tendency to wallow in the past, although Aaron is fully aware of this and fights hard against just yammering on about how cool things used to be.

"Pretty much every local place where I liked to hang out closed down or changed for the worse in the past year. It sucks, but it also makes me check out new places and notice old places I hadn't noticed before." (*Cometbus* #34)

As someone who stays busy locally and travels less than I would like to, I'm glad he writes so well about travelling so far and experiencing so many things. But I've also bristled at similar "changed for the worse" comments from him directed at on-going projects that are still in full-tilt creative mode. Yes, there are a ton of new elements that have replaced the old elements that made a project magic for him, but that's change, that's evolution, that's life. For me, and perhaps for others, this is the root problem I can point out about both *Zippo* and *Cometbus*—there's too often a tendency to look back instead of to the future. Yes, I liked a lot more of the bands back then too, and I had a ton of fun then, times I'm happy and proud of having survived moderately unscathed. But to paraphrase an obscure punk compilation, "That Was Then, This is Now."

This is only a minor and intermittent critique, since both Aaron and Eggplant (of *Absolutely Zippo*) are often starting new projects and wandering off in completely new directions. Heck, based on their respective personal histories, they have more interesting pasts to wallow in than many of us, and it's a credit that they don't indulge their wallowing tendencies more often than they do.

Reviewing this book is tough because there are so many reasons to have this book around, and I've had to stop myself from just writing the following sentences and turning in a two-sentence book review. You, the reader of MRR, should pick this *Cometbus* collection up for the following reasons (if you haven't already): Aaron's writing, Aaron's graphics, the contributors' articles and stories, Bobby Manic's comics, and the glimpses of forgotten and not-so-forgotten parts of East Bay punk history. The sheer volume of comedic, tragic, and witty tales, articles, and comics make this the ultimate toilet reading of the new millennium, or at least until he releases the next omnibus.—Jesse Luscious

Animals Like Us • Mark Rowland
222 pages • $18.00
Verso • 180 Varick Street
New York, NY • 10014-4606
www.versobooks.com

I am usually saddened when I see the preschool version of what a farm looks like or neatly packaged meat products displayed in stores. Both scenarios exist in order to fabricate a more palatable reality and mask the grotesque truth of how animals are tortured from birth to death. *Animals Like Us* exposes the illogical and immoral abuse of animals. Mark Rowland debates the common misconceptions that arise when discussing animal rights. He continually proves that that the way animals are currently treated is irrational.

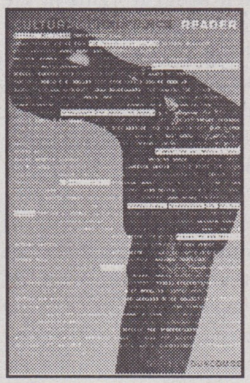
Before grappling with specific horrifying acts animals endure, Rowland sifts through the moral arguments that tend to surface when discussing animal rights. He evaluates the animal mind, its cognitive abilities and the probability of animals being capable of suffering. He successfully demonstrates that animals do feel pain and have mental states, desires, and reasoning abilities. He then uses several philosophical arguments to analyze moral relevance, innate potential, species exclusion, and equality. Uniquely, Rowland keeps a sense of humor throughout this process of illuminating the holes in faulty logic that condone the abuse of animals.

Once general belief systems are challenged, individual animal-based institutions are examined. Animal husbandry, vivisection, zoos, hunting, and keeping pets are all under scrutiny. Powerful images of those industries are described. Rowland vividly recounts the brutal life of a "layer" chicken—her debeakings, her miserably small cage that she shares with up to six other birds, and the violence that those cramped conditions bring all come to painfully to life. Factory farming and vivisection horror stories, though abundant, always seem to be of little interest to the general public. For most the comfort of living in denial outweighs the quest for the gory truth. For someone already sensitive to the pain animals suffer and aware of these atrocities, this is difficult reading. For a sensitive person that has been dodging this information, it would logically call for life changes.

Rowland categorizes three levels of animal rights activism, lifestyle changes, spreading the word, and civil disobedience. Within each of these levels he offers actual concrete activities that vary in involvement and personal risk. At one extreme, animal rights "terrorism" is discussed as possibly going too far. Still, Rowland argues that most animal rights civil disobedience does not equal terrorism because it is not violent or destructive to human beings, only to property. To quote, "You cannot be violent to a table. You can be violent with a table..." He states that any act that sets out to involve violence is morally unacceptable. Yet, when aware of these facts, negative obligations like not eating meat, not buy animal tested products, and the like are morally imperative.

Sadly, the greater public, who needs to become aware of the truth behind their food and entertainment, would quickly put down this book if they were to stumble upon it. The discomfort of logically analyzing irrational beliefs and visualizing what one's individual choices actually endorse is a difficult and painful process. The population that would actually read and most benefit from *Animals Like Us* are dedicated animal rights activists who need more intelligent ways to back up their beliefs. Possibly, *Animals Like Us* could reignite the spark for those who once thought animal rights had a place in their daily lives, but no longer feel that there is any relevance to making such personal choices. —Tobia Jean

Cultural Resistance Reader • Stephen Dunscombe
447 pages • $20.00
Verso: UK: 6 Meard Street • London • WIF OEG UK
US: 180 Varick Street • New York, NY • 10014-4606



I began reading *Cultural Resistance Reader* the same week I heard the song "London Calling" as part of a televised enticement to purchase a Jaguar. The book and the commercial raise similar questions—what are the powers and pitfalls of cultural resistance? Is it the most meaningful thing we can do or merely a feel-good embrace of the aesthetics of rebellion, which in fact changes little and can easily be commodified? Through a wide sample of texts which includes the words of, among others, Gandhi, Hakim Bey, Bertolt Brecht, Kathleen Hanna, Karl Marx, and Ice-T, Stephen Dunscombe leads us through a refreshingly nuanced look at these questions. Along the way, the book ambitiously examines overt and covert forms of resistance on the part of Diggers, ravers, riot grrls, Pachucos, slaves, mods, and romance-novel readers, just to mention a few.

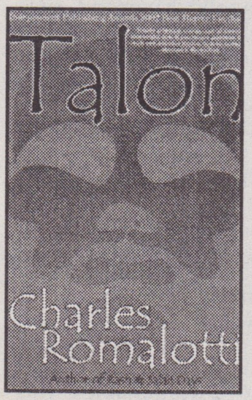
Occasionally the older pieces, lacking the full historical context, can be difficult to follow. Reading Marx and Engels' tart commentary on Old and New Hegelians, I felt as if they were chortling into their beards at their

own witticisms, while I sat there wanting to have the inside jokes explained. But it's great to look back at the folks whose thoughts and actions have created paths for us. Walter Benjamin's essay "The Author as Producer" is one of the best inspirations for writing a zine that I've encountered—and it was written about half a century before the word "zine" existed.

Additionally, the historical issues at hand often have striking continued relevance. For example, James Scott's piece from Weapons of the Weak discusses different forms of squatting in Europe of centuries past: "In one sphere, for example, lies the quiet, piecemeal process by which peasant squatters have often encroached on plantation and state forest lands, in the other a public invasion of land that openly challenges property relations. In terms of actual occupation and use, the encroachments by squatting may accomplish more than openly defiant land invasion, though the de jure distribution of property rights is never publicly challenged." How like the current debate around squatting—what's more effective, the symbolic takeover of a building, lasting six hours and covered by the news and thereby bringing attention to housing issues, or the quiet occupation of a space which allows it to actually house people or community activities?

I greatly appreciate Dunscombe's role as editor of this reader. He acts as an adept facilitator, clarifying his authors' words without speaking for them, always showing different sides to every debate, refining the questions at hand but allowing the reader to reach to her or his own conclusions. Dunscombe's own explanatory prose is thoughtful, succinct, and filled with excellent personal examples. I've read quite a few "best-of" anthologies where the editor immodestly decided to include not one but two of his own mediocre works. Here, in contrast, I found myself desiring even more of the editor's words than what he's humbly allowed himself. Dunscombe's introduction is one of my favorite pieces in the book. He describes his own coming to punk, "a joyous homecoming to a world I hadn't even know existed," which allowed him to move from consumer to creator and created a path for him to act out his politics. "Punk didn't work unless it was performed and by writing songs, dressing up, and playing out, I learned to perform my passions. That is, I learned how to transform ideas into action. When I found my way to political activism a few years later, it was an easy step because I was already halfway there. But only halfway." Dunscombe found that punk in itself could have its political limits: "The culture of resistance that my friends and I had built became a safe place to hide. Fortified by our righteous sense of superiority, stocked with a steady supply of punk rock band, club, and scene trivia to keep us busy, boundaries between 'us' and 'them' clearly demarcated by dyed hair and leather jackets, we closed off the world." Dunscombe found his way, through punk, to activities such as Reclaim the Streets, which he felt contrasted with the "defeats and defeatism" of the left. Though Dunscombe himself raises the issue of whether Hakim Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zone is in some ways defeatist in itself, it's hard not to find hope in his recounting of a street takeover and party in place of the regular boring old protest: "In place of the sour Lefty cry of "No! We're against it," we yelled out triumphantly: Yes! This is what we're for!" —Melissa Klein

Talon • Charles Romalotti
179 pages • $10.00
Layman Books • PO Box 4702
Austin, TX • 78765-4702



Josephine Ott is a young African-American woman from L.A. Her brother has just been shot in a gang-related driveby. She's never been involved in her sibling's gang activity, but she was present at the time of the attack. She flees the scene, and the city, with a bag full of cash and makes her way to Key West, Florida.

Rusty is a teenage girl from rural Illinois and she's also on her way to the same place, but for a totally different reason. She's learned about the S.H.A.R.P.s from the Internet and from attending college. She became enamored with their lifestyle and now she's out to join her anti-racist allies to rally against the racist Rev. Strickland, who is basically a mirror image of that real life "God Hates Fags" guy.

Early on, in Key West, Josephine is attacked by the visiting racist skinheads and almost slashed with a knife before she's saved by a crimson-skinned local named Jobie. He attacks them with firepower, literally, and they escape unscathed. As Josephine and Jobie get acquainted, she learns about the disease that gave him his bright red skin color. He is a secretive loner, he's lost his sense of touch, he eats fire on the boardwalk for tourist's cash, and he's working on a book, called The Apolitical Manifesto, that he believes will change the world.

Rusty makes her way to the rally in hopes to make a change and become some sort of hero in the eyes of her friends and her mother. When she sees that her friends aren't going to do anything, she attempts to charge the stage and attack Rev. Strickland herself. She's quickly captured by the authorities and held back against a wall. While Rusty has their attention, Jobie sneaks in under a makeshift cloak of beach towels (It's hard for me to understand how some bright red guy with a weird cloak can wander around unnoticed in Key West, but whatever...) and blows fire at them. This act disorients the cops and Rusty is able to escape, just in time to save Jobie from the refrigerator-sized skinhead that is pursuing him. The two of them become quick friends over beers and conversation.

During all of this, a celebrity named Koz-Mo and up-and-comer Talon, are on vacation from their traveling freak show, The Czars Of Scar. Of course, they're in Key West as well. While visiting a tattoo shop, a display picture dredges up old memories in Talon's mind. It turns out that Jobie is suspected of murdering Talon's girlfriend and then stealing his car. When he finds out that Jobie now lives in Key West, he vows revenge.

As the story develops further, their lives collide like a train wreck until finally, one side must triumph.

One of the things that I generally like about a good book is getting lost in the story and not wanting to put it down for hours. When I finally do wrestle myself away from it, it takes a few minutes to readjust to everyday life. This didn't really happen to me with *Talon*. I had a hard time relating to the characters in the story and an even more difficult time trying to like them. Therefore, it was hard for me to care when anyone in the story died.

I didn't feel like there was too much character development. Everything just seemed like it was based on stereotypes. Take Rusty, for example: she's a skinhead girl (the term "skinbyrd" is actually used in the book), very pro-America, with a fringe haircut and has a deep belief in pride and trying to be a hero. Jobie, besides his skin being bright red, is your average, paranoid crusty kid: facial tattoos, breathes fire, talks about being stalked by the Freemasons, wants to get drunk a lot, and believes he "will bust the cap off of tyranny." I guess it's good that the characters stuck to their beliefs, but they just seemed like cartoon characters to me, at times. It was hard to take them seriously.

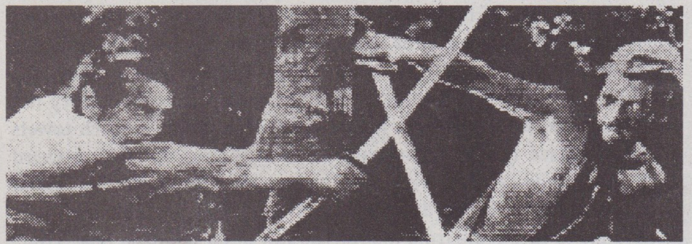
Personally, I feel like this book was written in a hurry and overlooked some glaring contradictions. For example, we learn from Jobie, "I have lost my sense of touch." Yet, later on, "he could feel the heat rising from the engine" of his scooter as well as "feel the vibration of the road in his tense muscles." Is this sense coming back to him or was it just an editorial mistake? We never learn.

I swear that I wanted to like this book. I really tried. I even let other people read passages to me so that I could hear it in someone's voice besides my own. None of those people really liked it either and I received their criticisms as well, which I'll spare you from. It just didn't work for me on any level and I actually found myself disappointed when one of the "good guys" was still alive at the end.

This book is the second installment in a three part series by Romalotti. If you read the first book, *Rash*, or if you're a fan of his writing already, go ahead and continue with *Talon*. This was my first exposure to Romalotti, and his somewhat overly dramatic, macabre writing style left me with my insides roiling. If you're looking for new authors and novels to indulge in, keep looking. Sorry. —Greg Harvester

MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



THEY LOST CONTROL

Early punkers might recall Factory Records' posthumous tribute to Sid Vicious (released in a vinyl pouch, the cassette in gold). Post-punkers will remember Joy Division, and the suicide of lead vocalist Ian Curtis as a turning point for both the label and the band. **24 Hour Party People** is Factory's story, a label which always seemed to be on the verge of demise.

The inspiration for Factory occurred on June 4, 1976, when the Sex Pistols played for 42 people in an funky public hall in Manchester. Among the audience that evening, there were Howard Devoto and the future Buzzcocks, as well as the concert's co-promoter—smart, opinionated Tony Wilson (Steve Coogan). He would soon bring in many of the early punk bands before they were great (Siouxsie and the Banshees, The Fall, the Stranglers) and one or two forgotten ones (like Vini Reilly, aka The Durutti Column). And Manchester was to be the stuff of one more legend—the place where Wilson launched Factory Records with pal Alan Erasmus (Lennie James).

24 Hour Party People is as much a biopic of Wilson as it is for the burgeoning Manchester scene. Factory itself was more a concept or experiment than a label; framed in their offices—a contract written in Wilson's blood, that rights to all the records were to be retained by the artists. In short, the value of the label was dependent on his relationship to the bands, and nothing more.

Armed with his weekly TV show and a huge ego, Wilson supported the scene on several levels, frequently at the expense of his family life. In an early aside to the camera (there are many), he compares himself to a modern-day Icarus. Educated in Cambridge, he advises the audience that they should know all his references.

The narrative quickly focuses on Wilson's association with the Stiff Kittens (later known as Warsaw and Joy Division). Lead vocalist Ian Curtis (Sean Harris) wastes no time the first time he meets Wilson. "You're a cunt," he announces, out of the blue. Then he says it again. The future Joy Division would become the Factory's signature band.

The film's portrait of Tony Wilson (done with the help of the real Wilson) is that of a droll, funny, and lovable egotist who, if he saw God (and in this movie, he does) it would end up looking like him.

His love of the Manchester music scene motivates him to start the stylish Hacienda nightclub, which is notoriously slow in taking root. Combine that with his habit of releasing records with outrageously expensive packaging that actually causes Factory to lose money, and you have a recipe for disaster.

Ever conscious of his street-cred, Wilson was always willing to sponsor financial losers. On one hand, there's A Certain Ratio, an art-pop disaster forever destined to play to empty halls and leave thousands of records in remainder racks to this day. And then there was the Happy Mondays, a drug-fueled black hole of a band whose lead vocalist kidnaps the studio tapes after a drug cool-down in the Caribbean, then demands ransom for their return (minus the vocal track).

Maybe the most memorable fuck-up is Martin Hannett (Andy Serki), the drunken, overweight producer whose insights helped mold the Factory aesthetic. Like Ian Curtis, this talented eccentric was to pass away before his time.

The distinctive achievement of director Michael Winterbottom is to give a remarkably authentic picture of UK punk and post-punk as it developed over a decade and a half. You also come to appreciate Wilson's love for Manchester—a town filled with factories and mills—and its scene. On the cutting edge of rave subculture, the club starts to die just as the scene reaches its decadent peak. More and more of the kids start using Ecstasy instead of buying alcohol at the club. Turf wars between competing drug dealers make for regular shootings. Soon, Wilson is forced to hire the dealers as security (the recipients of big kickbacks) on the theory that he "has to keep his enemy close."

You come to like the ever-ironic Wilson, who never gives up on his home turf. After all the chips have fallen and the Hacienda goes into receivership, he's fantasizing about a record reissue—in this case of the ever-unpopular Durutti Column, no less. Well, at least his heart's in the right place. (An added bonus: Look for some of the biggest Manchester stars in cameo roles.)

What to Do in Case of Fire? weaves an equally glorified account of the punk rock ethic, and this time it's literal blast. In 1987, a small commune of German anarchist punks call themselves "The Anti-Concrete League" (aka Corp 36). They take over a squatter's paradise on the grimy side of town, fight off the cops with trash and a rain of piss, and blow up ugly, old buildings as a public service. They're less "anarchy and peace" than "anarchy and fun," and proudly memorialize their feats in a series of 8mm underground films that make agit-prop seem like a toga party with mohawks.

They set up one last bomb...and for some reason it doesn't detonate. Before too long, the Berlin Wall has been pulled down and the Germanys unify, but it still hasn't gone off. But in 2000, it finally does. By now it's a very different Germany, and a no-nonsense police captain has promised to find the perpetrators and toss them behind bars forever.

In the meantime, they've mostly put aside their punk playthings. Two of them, Tim (Til Schweiger) and his crippled, rowdy pal Hotte (Martin Ferfel) are still wearing their leather jackets and squatting proudly. As for the rest—the sell-outs—they're uniformly afraid their past will catch up to them. There's a nervous prosecuting barrister (Matthias Mtschke), who spends most of his time counseling surrender; a single mom (Nadja Uhl) whose most radical pursuits these days is trying to find a babysitter; there's an insanely driven ad exec (Sebastian Blomberg) who's also insanely rich; and gorgeous Flo (Doris Schretzmayer), who's about to marry into the jet-set. They're a little rusty at being anarchists, but there's no choice but to fire up their old radicalism and find the cache of incriminating tapes—which are now in the underground hangar of a gated police compound. A sharp veteran cop (Klaus Lowetsch) isn't going to make it easy for them, even if it means violating their civil rights into the process.

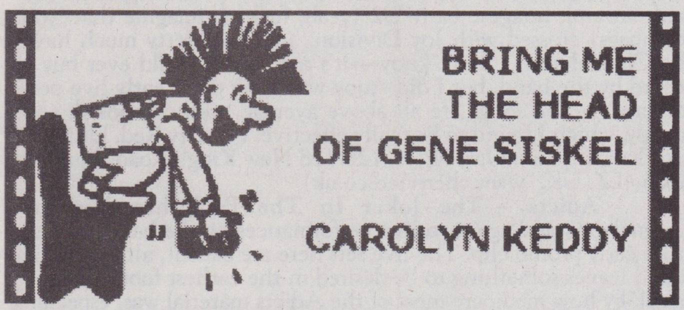
For the most part, **What to Do in Case of Fire?** sustains itself on many levels with dexterity, and certainly rates as one of the highlights of German filmmaking this year. It's a reminder that punk can be credible and fun.

On the other hand, the story for Yu Young-Sik's **Anarchists** is involves the rebellion of Chinese and Korean radicals against Japanese occupation in 1924 Shanghai. Played out not unlike an Asian version of **The Untouchables**, this

often has the bigger-than-life feel of a John Woo actioner. It's also founded in reality. The story was spawned from the adventures of the filmmaker's great-grandfather, when being radical had a death sentence.

Imperialist western interests had already been sucking China dry for nearly a century. For Japan, however, China was only a building block in their hegemony over a growing Asian empire. Few are strong enough to oppose Japanese military might. But an anarchist group leader (Jang Dong-Gun) is uncompromising, and willing to use any kind of violence in the revolutionary cause. His colleagues (which include at least one turncoat) increasingly worried about how how their social disobedience melds into the dangerous world of organized crime, gun-running and even the opium trade.

These anarchists are less ambiguous in their delineation of right and wrong than they are about good and evil. In their world (not unlike our own) some see war as terrorism while others regard terrorism as a kind of urban warfare. It may be an uncomfortable thought in post-9/11 America, but **Anarchists** reminds us that these ironies have been with us for a long time.



I'M A GENIUS. YOU'RE FUCKIN' WANKERS.

Should a movie be called "bad" because you don't like the music in it? That is my question concerning **24 Hour Party People**. Everyone I know who has seen it has to point out to me that they do not like Happy Mondays or rave music so they thought the second half of the film sucked. Fine. People are entitled to their opinions, but I cannot accept that I am the only open-minded person who felt that second half of the film wasn't really about rave music. How is it that I was able to easily overlook it and no one else could?

24 Hour Party People is the story of Factory Records, focusing on their two major bands, Joy Division and Happy Mondays as seen through the eyes of one of the label's founders Tony Wilson. People who can't handle the second half of the story have to remember that as much as you love Joy Division, it was unfortunately Happy Mondays and the whole rave scene that made the label and Manchester famous. I realize that the Happy Mondays have kind of disintegrated into obscurity and most people who would see this film were well aware of Factory Records prior to all this. We were ahead of our time. However, I prefer the entire story, all the uncool parts included.

24 Hour Party People's main character is Tony Wilson, an English television personality who has one of those moments when something happens that changes everything. Tony saw the Sex Pistols play a show in Manchester on June 4, 1976 put on the Buzzcocks. Due to this one concert attended by forty-two people, Tony begins to focus his energy on bringing punk rock to the people. He begins to introduce bands on his television show as well as begins to book a night at a local club for bands to play.

Tony Wilson as a person is one of those people you either hate or love. He is pompous, self-centered, self-important, but contributes so much to the Manchester rock scene that it is easy to excuse him for it. He continually points out symbolism and mistakes in the film, reminding us that he chooses to go by the famous John Ford quote, "When you have to choose between the truth and the legend, print the legend." When walking into the first Factory night at the Russell Club, people in line start calling him a wanker. He smiles through it all. His wife Lindsay comments to Tony's partner Alan Erasmus that Tony doesn't care what people say about him as long as they are talking about him. One man in line asks Tony for an autograph and then inside Ian Curtis yells at him, "Tony Wilson, you cunt." Later in the film Tony will be shot at a few times, beaten up a few times, and had many insults hurled at him. He always says what's on his mind, continually defending his choices even when he looks like a total fool. I like his character and after seeing the film, dug up a few late 80s interviews with Tony Wilson and discovered that he comes across exactly as he is portrayed in **24 Hour Party People**. Now, that's scary.

The story of Manchester's musical scene is a typical one. Like all small scenes, all the talent is concentrated in a small group of people. Of the forty two people present at the first Sex Pistols show, the majority of them go on to influence the music scene in some way. There was the Buzzcocks, Joy Division, A Certain Ratio, that Simply Red guy, producer Martin Hannett, etc. Martin Hannett is my favorite character. He gets a small part, but it's memorable. He is one of the first people to start pogoing at the Sex Pistols show. He's got all the best lines too. When Wilson goes to ask him to record the first Joy Division record, Hannett is outside on a hill recording. Wilson asks what he is doing. He replies, "I'm recording silence." "You're recording silence?" Wilson reiterates. "Now, I'm recording Tony Fucking Wilson," he answers. And as he quits Factory, "I'm a genius. You're fuckin' wankers. You'll never see me again." He drinks while recording, declares himself a genius and pulls a gun on Tony Wilson.

The Joy Division parts of **24 Hour Party People** are without a doubt the best. Having an overabundance of Joy Division albums, bootlegs and videos at my disposal, I was able to reference a great deal of the events in the film. The scene while Joy Division is recording "She's Lost Control" with Martin Hannett is fantastic. Hannett decides drummer Steve Morris is playing too normally. "Faster, but slower," Hannett explains to him, but then decides that the entire drum set needs to be dismantled. Hannett then gets Morris to play on the studio roof with only a couple of drums. The little event may seem rather insignificant, but when you compare live recordings of the band to studio recordings you can hear the difference.

The scene involving Ian Curtis's death is handled OK. I am very sensitive to portrayals of suicides in films. Having had to deal with a similar one myself, I always find them to be in poor taste. Two feet hanging in the top of the screen while Herzog's **Stroszek** is playing on television may be accurate, but could have been done better. Still, interspersed with an old fashioned town crier announcing his death on TV as well as Wilson recalling happier times with Ian balances things out. Wilson, of course, takes it over the top declaring Ian's death the music equivalent of Che Guevara.

The attention to detail in **24 Hour Party People** is pretty amazing. All of the actors look so much like the people they are portraying. It's kind of unnerving. The smallest thing is taken in to consideration. Photographs of Ian Curtis and Joy Division performing are recreated to an exact match. You can tell there was a lot of time put into getting things right. That has to be admired in a film that attempts to cover any sort of actual events.

When Tony and crew open their own club The Hacienda in an attempt to keep the idea of live music in Manchester alive, it is viewed as an insane idea. At first it is. The club has cost Factory 700,000 pounds. Opening night is a performance by A Certain Ratio to a crowd of thirty. Wilson jokes that everyone wanted to play opening night at the Hacienda: Bowie, The Rolling Stones, Sex Pistols, but he chose A Certain Ratio because they were his band and he wanted it to be a place for Manchester bands to play. On a Tuesday night to a crowd of Tony Wilson and the bartender, Vini Reilly plays. After he is done, Tony reassures him by saying that he can be happy with the performance because he makes some of the best music around. You can tell that Tony actually feels this way.

The thing that popularizes the Hacienda is the Happy Mondays. They are a dance band with slow repetitive grooves. The drug Ecstasy influences their music and their audience's reaction to it. The thing I find strangest about the Happy

Mondays is their one member Bez. Bez was the supplier of Ecstasy so he does have a use, but lead singer Shaun Ryder depends on him as kind of a band mascot. He wants Bez in the studio while he is recording to keep the vibe going. When Happy Mondays are performing at the Hacienda, it isn't until Bez gets up on stage and starts dancing that the crowd really gets into it. It's very odd.

Happy Mondays and Ecstasy are the fall of the Hacienda. Wilson claims the club continually loses money because they don't sell E at the bar. Then drug-related violence kicks in. People are killed inside the Hacienda, forcing them to hire drug dealers as their security. Happy Mondays go to Barbados to record an album so that singer Ryder will not have access to heroin. Of course, there are other drugs in Barbados, particularly crack. The band doesn't get much work done on their album and ends up costing the label lots of money.

When Factory finally recovers the Happy Monday tapes, they discover the lack of vocals. Since the label is broke, Tony devises a plan to get London Records to help pay for getting Ryder back into the studio. Either the plan is not well thought out or Tony Wilson is completely crazy. At that meeting, Roger the head of London Records offers Factory 5 million pounds for the company. When Tony asks what he wants for that, Roger says, "Everything. The bands, the back catalog, even this table." He gestures to a ridiculous looking meeting table that Wilson had paid 30,000 pounds for causing Rob Gretton to attempt to kick his ass. Tony then gives a speech that is inspired and completely stupid. He shows Roger his contract with the bands on his label, a piece of paper with one sentence written in his blood giving the bands complete control over their music and the freedom to leave the label whenever they feel like it. He claims, "I don't have the option of figuratively or literally selling out."

24 Hour Party People is an interesting look at the music industry. Tony Wilson seems to be someone who got into it for all the right reasons and with the right intentions. He still works at his day job and runs Factory. I find it incredibly wrong that Ian Curtis should die so young and an asshole like Shaun Ryder could abuse every available drug and still be alive. It's so unfair.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com

When I checked the schedule for this issue's Punk Movie Night and I saw the names Forca Macabra, the Chameleons, the Adicts, and Peter And The Test Tube Babies, I was intrigued on the one hand and apprehensive on the other. When I checked the lobby card artwork (i.e. the videotape and DVD covers) for each film, I was once again intrigued by one of or those titles, and almost disinterested by the rest of the lot. I once read this quote by Paul Schrader (who wrote **Taxi Driver**) where he discussed opening credit sequences. To make a long quote short, Paul Schrader explained that a well-done opening credit sequence is indicative of a film that has at least a chance of being good. For the most part I've found this quote and Shrader's logic to be pretty right on, and what I also discovered was that lobby cards (Once again, videotape and DVD covers) are in no way a reflection of the quality of the product found within.

Forca Macabra - The Dirty Years 1991-2001 seemed like a sure thing to steal the show at this month's Punk Movie Night, and yet there is no way to describe how unimpressed I was with the overall presentation of this product. The cover art and videotape itself seemed to suggest that we would be witnessing some very early, raw footage of Forca Macabra, when in actuality what we get here are performances from 2000 and 2001. The footage, both on stage and back stage, is very mediocre and uninspired. The newer Forca Macabra material is bound to turn certain purists off as well, since Forca Macabra has turned into a full-blown metal band very much in the vein of Sepultura. Personally, I am a big fan of metal in the vein of early Sepultura ("Arise" or "Beneath The Remains"), and when put through an underground filter, as in the case of say Logical Nonsense, I tend to like it even more. This tape isn't complete crap, but it's definitely nothing special, and it's definitely not "1991-2001." (Available from MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru Kyoto 624-0913 JAPAN, available in the USA from Sound Pollution Records)

The Chameleons at the Gallery Club & The Hacienda in Manchester was a complete surprise to me, because I had no prior knowledge of this band, and the videotape artwork was totally fucking lame. Anyway, the Chameleons, it turns out, play what has become known today as new wave, but to some it is also the sound of early punk—I guess that kind of depends on when you were around. Imagine early U2 (yeah, fucking imagine that, you scumbags) crossed with Joy Division, and you pretty much have the Chameleons. I don't know—it's not that I would ever buy a record by the band, but I did enjoy watching these early live performances. The songs are all above average, well composed, and moody, which I found to be really effective. (Cherry Red, Unit 17, 1st Floor, Elysium Gate West, 126-128 New King's Road, London SW6 4LZ, UK, www.cherryred.co.uk)

Adicts - The Joker In The Pack has, like the Chameleons package, two live performances by the band, as well as an early promo clip. The live sets here are decent, although the sound leaves something to be desired in the earliest footage. I was struck by how mediocre most of the Adicts material was, especially when performed live. That's the way I enjoy listening to punk and hardcore, so I am much more judgmental from that standpoint. You'll get all your favorites here, like "Joker In The Pack," obviously, as well as "Viva La Revolution," and my favorite, "4321." As critical as one could get with this DVD package, and even the with band itself, there is definitely something about the clown make-up that just seems to elevate my thoughts and opinions about the Adicts. (Cherry Red, Unit 17, 1st Floor, Elysium Gate West, 126-128 New King's Road, London SW6 4LZ, UK, www.cherryred.co.uk)

OK, we've reached the best this column has to offer in this issue, and that is **Peter And The Test Tube Babies: Cattle and Bum Plus Live in Manchester 1983**. I've never been a huge fan of Peter And The Test Tube Babies, but after experiencing **Cattle and Bum**, I have to say that I am a convert. This band is a powerhouse in the live department, and unlike most bands we come across here at Punk Movie Nights, they are thoroughly entertaining in the backstage footage as well. This package features clips, both live and promo, from every stage in the Test Tubes' long career, and while the band clearly lost their fashion sense at certain points along the way, the music and live performances in particular are never less than top notch. I especially enjoyed the bonus concert footage from 1983, which is totally in the vein of early GBH, musically. From a live performance standpoint, Peter And The Test Tube Babies crush a band like the Adicts, whose own footage from 1983 already looks and sounds dated. This DVD package is highly recommended! (Cherry Red, Unit 17, 1st Floor, Elysium Gate West, 126-128 New King's Road, London SW6 4LZ, UK, www.cherryred.co.uk)

The last thing on this month's agenda is to inform you that I am booking another Punk Movie Night at Gilman (Read about the previous one at: www.wethepunx.com/ugzshows.html.) We have December 6th set aside, and so if you have an underground film or video that you'd like us to consider showing, then please send me a copy with contact information ASAP to: Jay, PMB 419, 1442A Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709. We are looking for very dark, very evil, twisted types of films this go around. Preferably short films (15 minutes max) that have been transferred to video, although I do have an 8 mm projector if you entrust me with actual copy of your film. If you are considering doing so, please email me first at: disintegration@wethepunx.com. —Jay Dead

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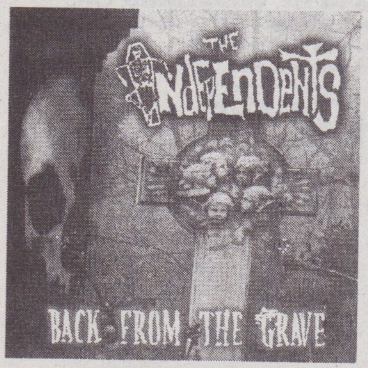

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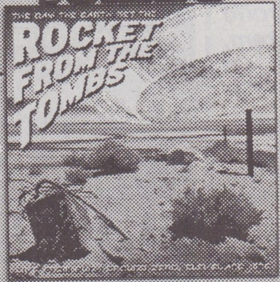

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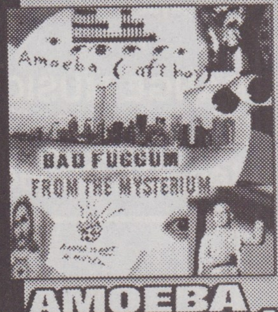

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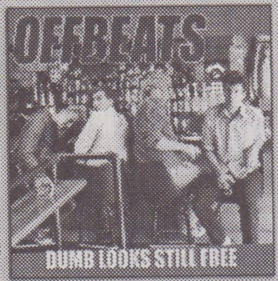

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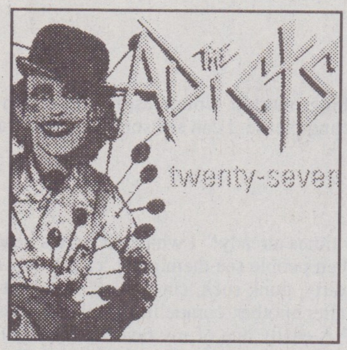
5150 - "Li'l Miss Succubus" EP

They're bootlegging everything these days. Records that were marginal when they were put out ten to fifteen years ago are appearing all over the place with blank white labels and photocopied pic sleeves. This one includes the tracks that appeared on the original record with this sleeve, plus a couple of others (origin unknown). This is pretty average hardcore, in my opinion, with a quick pace, heavily distorted guitar and garbled vocals/lyrics. I remember that collectors had an interest in it at one point, probably because it was a very limited—with good reason—release. Probably only necessary if you are cataloging, rather than enjoying or collecting. (KK)
(Reagan Era HC)

ABSENTEES - "Illegal Listening Device 1979-2000" CD

From a band that gained notoriety on the *KBD* collector front for having a rare record from 1981, we have a 37-song CD, a discography of sorts, which is cool since every release seems to be low quantity. About two thirds of this is recent stuff. Lots of silly titles and underproduction for the collector scum who desire lack of quantity and not quality. (RL)
(Artifix, PO Box 641, Moreno Valley, CA 92556, www.artifixrecords.com)



THE ADICTS - "Twenty-Seven" CD

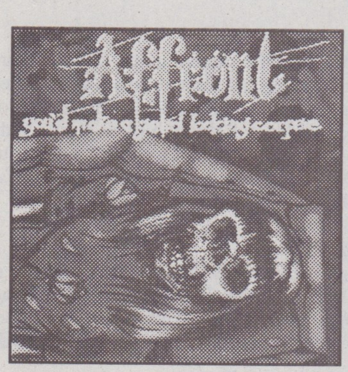
Originally released in 1992, this pop punk record is pretty pleasing. Lots of melodic songs with meaningless lyrics including lots about girls. (SR)
(Captain Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP108QA, ENGLAND, dee_dee_records@hotmail.com)

AFFRONT - "You'd Make a Good Looking Corpse" CD

Six songs of basic melodic punk hardcore from Washington, DC. They pull it off pretty well, but there's nothing on this CD that reached out of my boom box and kicked me in the ass. "My Dreams Won't Die With My Friends" almost came close. The whoa-oh backups reminded me of an earlier, pre-goth AFI. Could be better, could be worse. (CC)
(Commode, PO Box 34101, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T3C 3W2)

THE AGITATED - "Go Blue, Go Die" CD

Another re-issue (although aside from a couple of comps, this band never issued anything in the first place) from another relatively unknown middle American early 80s hardcore band. Thirteen studio tracks from 1983 that blow the doors off of most of the hardcore coming out these days...fast, deliberate, and pissed. The AGITATED hail(ed) from Ohio, and their sound falls somewhere between area bands like PAGANS and the nearby NECROS. Also included are four live tunes (which is just right, often re-issues cram way too much crappy shit onto the disc and bore the hell out of the listener) that highlight this band's ripping intensity onstage. Minimal liner notes that give you the basics, and no lyrics (they've probably been long forgotten). (WN)
(Smog Veil, 316 California Ave. #207, Reno, NV 89509)

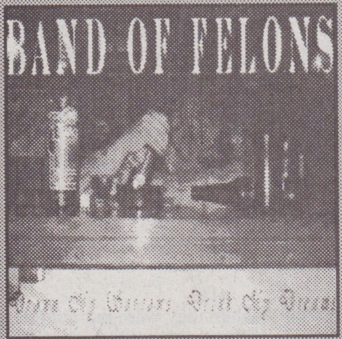


ANCHORMAN - "Seasoned Smart Ass" CD

More emotional hardcore/punk/pop/rock. Like all the stuff that came out on Revelation in the mid 90s. Fast-paced, tuneful, emotional, reminds me of FARSIDE. (AD)
(Purpleskank, c/o 611 NW 38th Ct, Pompano Beach, FL 33064)

ANNIHILATION TIME - CD

From the Raymond Pettibon artwork to the dirty, dirgey bass lines, this is straight up BLACK FLAG. Unfortunately, it's Henry Rollins BLACK FLAG, y'know, the long hair and fishnet shirt era. Still it's pretty rockin' stuff,—it's actually better than I remember. If Hank's yer man, then you'll dig these cats. (AD)



(It's Alive, no address)

ARMSTRONG - "Dick, the Lion-Hearted" CD
Emo alert! Emo alert! Sickly sweet melodic poppy punk—fuck there's a lot of this stuff this month and I'm running out of ways to describe it. Not bad, some nice tunes and hooks, it's just too clean. (AD)
(Owned and Operated, PO Box 36, Ft. Collins, CO 80522)

AT WAR WITH SHADOWS - "Healing Is Not An Option" CD
These guys are all over the place as far as style and influence goes, but without a doubt AT WAR WITH SHADOWS play some fucking serious metal! Imagine terrifying RORSCHACH style cottonmouth growls seeping through a sporadic mix of chugga chugga guitars, melodic leads, MEGADETH solos, and constant tempo changes. At times they sound exactly like YOU AND I, then twenty seconds later the jump to something else. Their live show must be insane... Also released as a 7" EP, this CD includes on extra track. (VH)
(Hater of God, PO Box 666, Troy, NY 12181-666)

BAND OF FELONS - "Drown My Sorrows, Drink My Dreams" CD
Just because CDs are cheap to produce doesn't mean you have to churn out shitty looking releases like this. The cover is a horrible pixilated piece of crap which must have taken all of five minutes to put together. Make an effort, people! Musically, this is decent rousing street punk like a less polished oi version of ANTI FLAG. I'm all over this style when it has pace and balls like this, but the lackluster crappy packaging really takes away from what would be a fine release. (TB)
(Go For Broke, PO Box 38, South Amboy, NJ 08879)

BANGS - "Call and Response" EP
Hot damn, give me a house party and this band, and I'll be the happiest girl with sweat in her eyes in the room. Yeah, I guess we're all expecting to hear lyrics touching on the ethics of riot grrlness, but who cares? It is a lot more productive than complaining about broken hearts or spilt beer all the time. If I were in the mood to listen to the RUNAWAYS or early SLEATER-KINNEY, I would also slap this record onto the turntable. (MM)
(Punk In My Vitamins, PO Box 2283, Olympia, WA 98507)

BESTHÖVEN - "More Victims of War" EP
Grindin' fucking puke! That fucker lowfully moaning out his short, sweet lyrics of society's pain! This is some killer, to the max, Brazilian Punk. Get it, listen to it, read it, love it and come out stronger because of it. God, punk is good. (JA)
(Otto Itkonen, Maauunintie 19f45, 01450 Vantaa, FINLAND)

BIBLE OF THE DEVIL - "Firewater At My Command" CD
BIBLE OF THE DEVIL are a third rate BLACK SABBATH. Maybe that's not totally fair, but I don't smoke enough pot to get off on this masturbatory rock fest. (DL)
(no address)

BIG BUBBA - "Fuck this Place" CD
Sloppy punk that probably sounds better if you're drunk. Really drunk. There's no lyric sheet, but I'm going out on a limb by saying that these guys probably aren't the fervent political types. But with song titles like "Shut Up," "Underachiever," and "Fuck You Piss Off (Brand New Version)," there's a chance that I could be missing some underlying meaning. Um, really drunk. (CC)
(30700 Lone Pine Dr, Junction City, OR 97448)

BIKINI SPIDERS - "Arachniophilia" CD
Psychobilly about monsters, demons, body parts, and all things morbid. Uninteresting tunes with a vocalist who's trying a little too hard to be all "crazy." Stop the yodeling please. I can see some of you "crazy cats" liking this but not me. (SR)
(Zero Sum, bikinispiders@hotmail.com)

BITCHIN' - "The Night Life, the Tight Style" LP
"I can't review this fucking record! I've heard it too many times already!" I whine, as Sara's heading out. She laughs at me. She says, "You should say how it's funny when people see them play, 'cause they expected to see these 'cute' girls..." "They are cute girls!" I interject, "dirty, punk rock, cute girls!" The best kind, of course. Add a boy drummer, and the three-piece pours out, one after another, compelling punk melodies (edged with sadness or ferocity) that stay with you for hours. This LP is easily one of my favorite records this year, and the year's getting on in months. I actually get jealous, when other people listen to this record. I've considered cuddling with it. And why not? It's fearless, vital, sweet and tender. It gets better every time. (AC)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

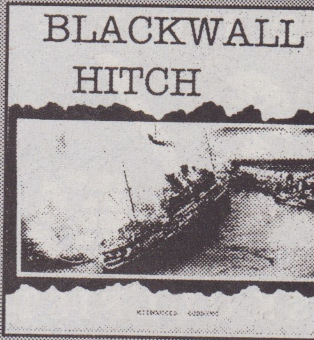
BLACK LIPS - "Freakout" EP
The sounds of four hairy fine-arts majors beating on oil drums at the student union. Tune in, turn on the BLACK LIPS, and drop out of the job pool...toss your flowing locks to and fro and dream of a darker tomorrow. Six tracks of loping, loose-limbed art garage jangle, falling just on the right side of "inept" and lovable in a retarded kid brother kinda sense. The BLACK LIPS trip over cables, fall through plate glass windows, eat the contents of ashtrays and turn in a ode to "Sweet Kin," and brag that "I've Got a Knife." Dense stuff, with a nice sense of casual abandon. (JH)
(Electric Human Project, 500 S. Union St., Wilmington, DE 19885)

BLACK MARKET FETUS/BODIES LAY BROKEN - split EP
Iowa's BLACK MARKET FETUS offer up five grind ladle punk tunes (but they could just as easily be hardcore ladle grind tunes) that will make your hair stand up. They avoid the all-out-grinding-frenzy approach, which can get dull, even for fans, and write fucking brutal metal/hardcore riffs with a more than liberal dose of grinding mayhem. Great lyrics and solid production make for one helluva side of wax. BODIES LAY

BROKEN opts for the all-out-grinding-frenzy approach, with low end croaking vocals and long between song samples. The songs are fucking insane; fans will listen over and over to figure out what the fuck is going on. (WN)
(Discos Al Pacino, PO Box 3052, Burnsville, MN 55337)

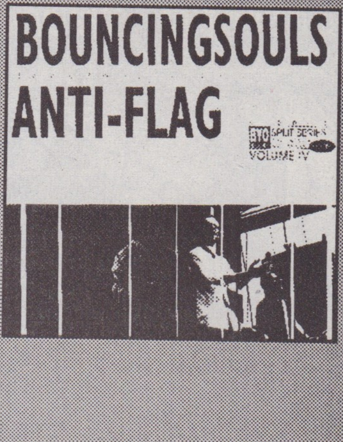
BLACKWALL HITCH - "Milwaukee Burning" EP
Yeah! This record rules. The tunes are reminiscent of bands like MINOR THREAT, BLACK FLAG, and 7 SECONDS, but not in the way that you think. I don't get the feeling that this has any sort of "early 80s revival" going on. The songs just kick butt in the same way that the bands I mentioned kicked butt. The songs are mid-tempo and the lyrics are really unique and sung in a way that makes the songs more interesting. The recording is so good too, it is really rough, but everything comes across really well, like a really good 4-track recording. The packaging on this is a nicely photocopied sleeve which is not amazing, but it is nice and simple, so I got no gripes. I can't wait for more from this band. Check this record out, definitely. If you don't like it you're an asshole. (WR)
($4 ppd: Blackwall Hitch, 3222 S. 23rd St., Milwaukee, WI 53215)

BLACK WIDOWS - "Stops a Beating Heart" CD
Rob Pennington is back once again, and this time it's with the guys from the NATIONAL ACROBAT. Not unlike the aforementioned band, BLACK WIDOWS pretty much pick up where they left off with their previous endeavors. Fans of both BY THE GRACE OF GOD and the NATIONAL ACROBAT will definitely enjoy this. Personally, I think this sounds like Pennington's trademark "falling down a well" vocals put over BL'AST. That's a good thing. Come to the West Coast. (CC)
(Initial, PO Box 17131, Louisville, KY 40217)



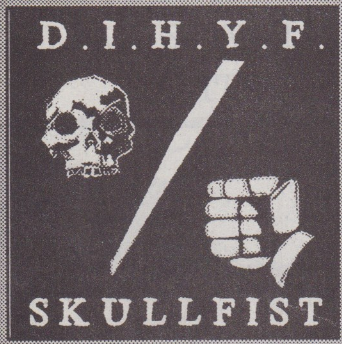
BLEEDING KANSAS/LA MANTRA DE FHIQRIA - split CD
We all know Ian MacKaye wrote the rule book for sXe hardcore (I heard you can get a bootleg copy on eBay for $90...), so I feel he's obligated to do the same for emo... But until that guy gets his shit together, I'll describe BLEEDING KANSAS as "motional hardcore," that is not at all similar to EMBRACE, RITES OF SPRING, HEROIN, MOSS ICON, or the GET UP KIDS. Their five songs of mid paced chaotic screamo have much more in common with the BLOOD BROTHERS, and at times DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN. Probably one of the better emo-hardcore bands I've heard lately. If this were a record instead of a crummy CD, we'd flip it over to hear LA MANTRA DE FHIQRIA who also get lumped into the emo category, but have a much more distinctive take on it—heavy guitar noodling, similar to CROM-TECH, thrown on top of mellow to monotone vocals, like early MILEMARKER, followed by heavy doses of abrasive screams. It's interesting. Aside from the whiny vocals I like it, and it creates the perfect mood to for a Friday night make out session. (VH)
(Arms Reach, 1220 W. Hood, Apt 2, Chicago, IL 60660)

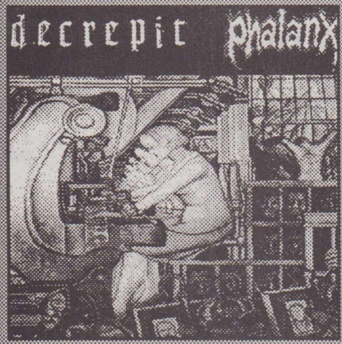
BOUNCING SOULS/ANTI-FLAG - "BYO Split Series Vol. IV" CD
I'll admit it, both these bands are a guilty pleasure of mine: both are well heeled at writing incredibly catchy songs, and when folx do that in a punk context I can't help but be sucker for it. BOUNCING SOULS give us six tracks of their uber melodic mid-tempo New Jersey punk rock— only complaint is the how well scrubbed and clean these recordings are—fuck that. Punk should be a little dirty, a little raw, and a little bit more pissed off sounding. Still, I like it. ANTI-FLAG is on the flip and bring us six more tracks of their infectious political pop punk. I've been a fan since I saw them open for AVAIL, RANCID, and the PINK LINCOLNS nearly a decade ago and while I might disagree with some decisions they've made, I think still they stand the test of time quite well. Sincere and passionate punk—and to be honest I'd rather see them selling hundreds of thousands of records than many others. Excellent BUZZCOCKS cover too. Thumbs up. (MT)
(BYO, PO Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067)



CALVARY - "Outnumbered Is Outflanked" LP
The overwhelming impression here, especially when the vocals kick in, is RITES OF SPRING. There's a hint of UK post-punk in the guitars, but a band that sounds like GANG OF FOUR with vocals like Guy Piccioto would sound too much like FUGAZI, which CALVARY don't. I'm harping on too much about the obvious influences on this band—the fact is they filter some of the best music of the eighties through their sound, and it comes out sounding a little retro, yet fresh at the same time. I definitely dig it. I'll be rocking this a lot once I buy it, I bet. (AM)
(Council, PO Box 220691, Chicago, IL 60622; info@councilrecords.com)

THE CLASH - "Rebellos Garajos: Demos & Outtakes '77-'84" LP
Sure there's the PISTOLS, and the RAMONES, and IGGY but the CLASH were the shit. Was there ever a cooler band? If it wasn't for them I wouldn't be sitting here. I'm one of those people who was a CLASH fan before I was a punk, basically that means I like *Sandinista* and *Combat Rock* as well as the first three, although some people will tell you that *London Calling* is crap, these people are full of shit and do not know what the fuck they're talking about, *London Calling* was the best one you idiots, the only thing better is the stuff they did in between *Give 'Em Enough Rope* and *London Calling*, the 10" and the *Cost of Living* EP. So if you ask a punker if he likes the CLASH and they say "yeah", and than ask them if they like *Sandinista* and they say "No, it's wank" then you will know for sure that they are a stupid ignorant fucker and not worth your time, they'll probably tell you that the DAMNED were better, at which point your words are useless and you should kick them in the nuts (or front bottom, if they're a girl, though girls have more sense, and the CLASH were a lot better looking.) Anyway, this here record is another one of those 'you should buy this because there's CLASH shit on here you don't have' deals, it's not needed but it's not unpleasant either. There's a lot of old demo quality stuff, and some interesting shit, like the version of "Innoculated City" with the 2000 Flushes commercial in it, a version of "Rock the Casbah" with Rankin' Roger (from the [fuck, ENGLISH] BEAT) and an alternate version of "1, 2, Crush On You" called "Oh Baby Oh." You also get an interview from BBC Radio. As I say it's not necessary but I'm still sitting here listening to the second side and usually I only listen to the first track of records I review, whoops. There's a nice line from Joe (always one for dealing out some wisdom to the kids) in the interview that's poignant right now... "I just hate the term new wave it makes me want to vomit." (AD)
(Garajos Rebellos, PO Box 16107, Madrid, SPAIN)





THE CLASH - "Rebellos Garajos: Demos & Outtakes '77-'84" LP
Sandinista might have made a decent seven-inch. (MT)
(Garajos Rebellos, PO Box 16107, Madrid, SPAIN)

CLENCHED FIST - "Welcome to Memphis" CD
These guys are definitely proud to be from Memphis. Apparently they won some kind of war there. Lyrics to their song "We Won the War" include "We won the war in Memphis/on the attack, bringing back/the old days are back." Who was the war against? Did you guys beat RAID? Because I know RAID had a song called "Words of War," and I heard they were a pretty tough Memphis bunch before they became hippies. Ah, it doesn't matter. Mediocre metallic moshcore recommended for people that like to beat the shit out of each other in the pit. (CC)
(Thorp, PO Box 2007, Upper Darby, PA, 19082)

THE COFFIN DAGGERS - CD
Surf music. Nothing more, nothing less. Straight-forward surf music, competently played and lacking any originality. (CK)
(Urko)

COMRADES - "No Escape" CD
A damn fine piece of plastic! 6 songs, 9 minutes, and lyrics filled with anger and frustration...the kind that go hand in hand with being a punker. Yeah, you want freedom, autonomy and all that stuff, but often smashing the state gets put on the sidelines while you marvel at the stupidity of your so-called peers. And the music is furious to match; a fast dual vocal hardcore attack with occasional double bass, simple solid riffs, and an awesome recording. No complaints here (this is also available on vinyl from Scud Records in France). (WN)
(S.O.A., via Oderrisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, ITALY)

COMRADES - "Early Days Masked Bunch!" CD
The brutally relentless grind assault of Italy's COMRADES will leave you with a broken collar bone and only three fingers on your right hand by the time you get to the end of this 49 song discography CD. (VH)
(S.O.A., via Oderrisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, ITALY)

CONTAMINATED - "Immunity?" EP
DIY political punk with an unpolished dirty sound and strong angry male vocals. I like the well thought-out lyrics about racism, gentrification, and AIDS and the explanations that go along with them. (SR)
(Absorbed Society, PO Box 1377, 1122 East Pike St, Seattle, WA 98122-3934)

D.I.H.Y.F - "Skullfist" EP
Don't stare at these guys, or they might "...then your teeth are broken the sound of a girl screaming as the blood is streaming" or "...we are SKULLFIST and we'll fist your skull" if you make them mad. These lyrics review themselves, and with the addition of some "impress the 'girl' with masculinity" wordage, you can decide if this is worth supporting. Musically, it's pretty good, slow pounding punk, but, with lyrics like these is it Punk? No!!! (JA)
(Rawker, PO Box 746437, Arvada, CO 80006)

DAY OF THE DEAD - "As Your Goals Crumble..." EP
This might be the first band I've heard described as a straight-edge band that doesn't actually sing about being straight-edge. I give them a lot of credit for that. They definitely have a lot of the musical elements of most straight-edge hardcore bands, in that there's thrash parts, mosh parts, and a crap-load of tempo changes, but they make up for it in other ways. The vocals are screamed instead of barked (always a plus) and they have the same sort of melodic sensibility as TRAGEDY at times. It also kind of reminds me of that NEW GRANADA EP from a few months ago, which is a good thing. (MX)
(Goodwill, c/o Dario Adamic, C.P. 15319, 00143 Roma Laurentino, ITALY)

DEADLOCK FREQUENCY "Saints and Sinners" EP
At first glance, the "dark" artwork and lyrics had me thinking these guys were doing the stoner sludgecore thing, but when the needle hit the turntable I was jolted out of chair by some energetic hardcore. I found myself finger pointing uncontrollably. DEADLOCK FREQUENCY play straight forward hardcore that sounds like a dirty version of SICK OF IT ALL, if that's at all possible... all three songs are good. But the spooky, ambient, or whatever, sound effects that take up almost all of the second side were a really fucking bad idea. (VH)
(Seven Lucky, PO Box 9546, Denver, CO 80209)

DEAD SERIOUS - "It's What You Can't See" CD
Solidly written and fast, this Virginia straight edge hardcore band probably makes the strongest case to be released on vinyl out of what seems to be the entire Thorp Records catalog that I have been assigned for review this month. This CD is reminiscent of the second IN MY EYES record, sans the whole positive ingredient. With song titles like "Smile You Yellow Tooth Bastard" and "Do Unto Others and Split," one could assume that the singer is unhappy about something. The lyrics themselves are very hate-filled and pissed off (which seems to be the recurring Thorp Records theme). (CC)
(Thorp, PO Box 2007, Upper Darby, PA, 19082)

DEBRIS - "Ten2" LP
God, this looks terrible just from the packaging. It's just really dry with endless political puke written all over it. Musically these guys just wanna sound really tough with heavy guitars and big ugly vocals, but come across more like a social studies course on steroids. Get off the airwaves. (DL)
(Autodafe, Nils Vosgrone, Hoxfelder Weg 71, 46325 Borken, GERMANY)

DECONDITIONED/BLASTFO ME - Split EP
DECONDITIONED, from Seattle, sound like they listen to the Flex Your Head LP on a daily basis. I

think these songs would be fucking rad if they could have gotten a better recording. But it sounds good as is, and they top it off with a cover of S.O.A.'s "Drawblank." BLASTFO ME are all over the place, throwing together crust, grind, sludge, hardcore, and booty-metal. It's not as ridiculous as it seems. This is some brutal shit that's worth checking out... A great first release for each of the bands. (VH)
(Banal Existence, 2706 Harvard Ave E, Seattle, WA 98102-3914)

DECREPIT/PHALANX - split EP
Three tracks of brutal crust from DECREPIT. Moderate Scandinavian influence, but these fellows are playing way too fast and are way too high to concentrate on one style...except raging hardcore insanity, of course. An awesome assault, it's a fucking shame they're gone. Slightly less insane are PHALANX, whose approach is more in the vein of 90s crusty punx like the PIST (but dirtier). Four tracks on their side, with political lyrics and pogo friendly beats. (WN)
(Un-Yelliman, PO Box 80131, Seattle, WA 98018)

DEFIANCE - "Out of the Ashes" LP
So, this record rules the school! It sounds exactly like DEFIANCE always sounds, yet even better somehow. Classic punk rock, you know what I mean. I don't know what's up with the five million pictures of the band featured on this gatefold, I mean they ain't very cute, but that's all right. Great cover of "No Room For You" by DEMOB. Also, the first relevant song about the new war on terrorism I've yet to hear. Buy this and some hairspray and raise your fucking fist! (JA)
(PunkCore, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)

DEXTER CHUMLEY ATTACK - "Death in Small Doses" EP
I was totally floored when I heard this record. The funny cover with a skeleton wielding a chainsaw and a barely readable band name (not the generic metal kind, thankfully) did not exactly get my juices flowing. But before the end of the first side I had my favorite band of the month. Ohio's DEXTER CHUMLEY ATTACK serve up ten awesome tracks of thrashing hardcore with ten times the diversity of most HC records that find their way through these doors. Don't get me wrong, Death in Small Doses is basically a hardcore punk record, but the shit is just devastating and each song is different enough to keep you wanting more. Amazing riffs and song structure, raw recording and female vocals that make the hair on the back of my neck stand up. Fucking great. (WN)
(Rubber City, PO Box 8349, Akron, OH 44320)

DERBY CITY PROJECT - "On the Follow Through" CD
Not to be confused with the Bay Area hip-hop group of same acronym, this actually seems to be more than a band. The liner notes say that there are "short films, photography, and animation" on the way, and I find that kind of cool. It's almost expanding the definition of what punk can be, and I like that. Musically, this is mostly melodic punk of the mid-tempo variety, with some cool breakdowns and even some ska elements (not full on ska parts, just some elements). It's more varied than most of the other crap, and that's okay by me. I'm curious to hear and see more. (MX)
(Shellshock, PO Box 242, Pewee Valley, KY 40056, derbycityproject.com)

DEVIL SKINS - "Liberta" EP
These Italian Skinheads are back to rock your world with melodic Oi! You remember of course, the brilliant split EP that the DEVIL SKINS did with the TEMPLARS. The new Blind Beggar EP has raised the bar even higher! The DEVIL SKINS start off the EP with a spirited title cut, "Liberta," sung in Italian. This song is deep, dark and dangerous! The second tune is "Fuori del Branco" and this song is even faster and more entertaining than the first! Flip the EP over and you get "No Comment (FUN)" which is a good drinking song with a ska background including horns and harmonica. This is a good record! (BR)
(Blind Beggar, Bogenstr. 25, D-66957, Eppenbrun, GERMANY, www.oirecords.com)

DIEHARD YOUTH - "Without the Kids We Would be Dead" CD
Yet another release from this prolific Tehachapi, CA band. I could never really get into this band personally, and this CD is no exception. While all their songs are well written and their lyrics are heartfelt, it's hard for me to get over the fact that this band is all over the place stylistically and musically. I'm by no means saying that hardcore bands can't incorporate different influences into their sound. What I am saying is that I feel like I am listening to five different bands on a compilation CD. They go from tough, youth crew-inspired hardcore like STRIKING DISTANCE ("I Hate Tic Tac Toe"), to a 7 SECONDS-like melodic approach ("TRL Punks"), and then a CARRY ON influenced track like "Friday Night Stereotype." Then there is the horrible SAVES THE DAY whining on the chorus of "Warm Blood from a Cold Heart." I think that might have been the nail in the coffin. Or maybe it was the mosh metal breakdown at the end of an otherwise good song like "As Posi As We Wanna Be." This just isn't my thing I guess. (CC)
(Thorp, PO Box 2007 Upper Darby, PA, 19082)

THE DISASTER - "Black and White and Red All Over" CD
Fans who miss KID DYNAMITE, and think that BREATHE IN just isn't cutting it, might want to look into this band. I am really surprised that no bigger labels have looked into signing these guys. This is an awesome blend of melody, fast hardcore, and gruff vocals. The few guitar octave parts and extra-long song titles are negligible when taking into account the overall great song writing. A winner. (CC)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126)

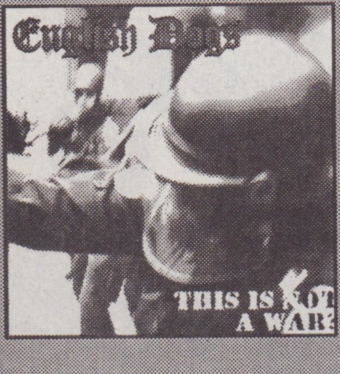
THE DISTRACTION - "Transmission Ignition/Nothin' to Me"
From the snotty n' hyper-nasal school of punk comes the DISTRACTION takin' off somewhere between the STITCHES and LE SHOCK. All in all, the DISTRACTION manage to pull out a pretty punchy little release worth a buck or two for your mix tape collection...very white studded belt material. (DL)
(Pelado, 521 W. Wilson #C103, Costa Mesa, CA 92627)

DR. GREEN – "Purvas" CD
I don't care what country it is from. If you have more ska than punk in your release I am probably not going to be that big of a fan. Too many horns can ruin a thing. (JF)

(Dr. Green, PO Box 790, Vilnius 2050, LITHUANIA, drgreen@hardcore.lt)

DRUNK INJUNS - "From Where the Sun Now Stands..." LP

Okay, I'm not going to lie. I don't know shit about this band. Maybe that makes me less punk rock in some people's eyes but whatever. Fuck off. There isn't a single record in this office with their name on it!! Here's what I can gather; old 80's skate band that actually sounded nothing like any form of skate rock I am familiar with (i.e. Orange County thrash and Fat Wreck), which is a very good thing. This band draws influence from everywhere, the RAMONES, DOORS, MISFITS, DAMNED, DEAD BOYS, DOLLS, everyone. This band really does fucking rock. This is apparently a reissue of some old DRUNK INJUNS material, as well as the ANCESTORS (who are an off shoot band) and an acoustic song about a a Mexican woman named Juanita. Here are some assumptions (yes, I know what they say about assuming); they have a member of the DWARVES in their ranks (Wholley Smokkes), they may have members of Mexican decent and possibly are from the San Francisco Bay Area.... then again I may be wrong. All I know is this record is great start to finish. Perfect for pogoing, slam dancing, skating or even washing dishes. The all purpose record. (BM)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 93141-9092, drunkinjuns.net)

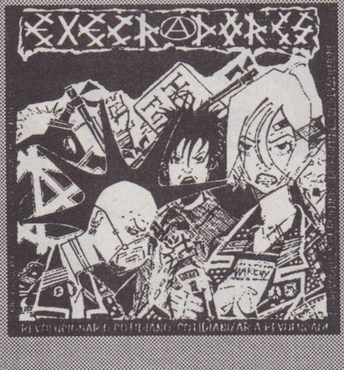


E-150/ZANUSSI - split EP

FUCK!!! Spain's E-150 have not let up one fucking bit, and here are seven more fastcore tracks that will rip your face off. Every instrument is played to perfection, and Abraham sounds like he is about to launch his vocal chords right out of his mouth. Fast as shit awesome hardcore. Use CRUDOS as a reference point if you haven't heard them before, but I would take E-150 any day, and the lyrics put this slab even further over the top. More Spanish hardcore from ZANUSSI, with blown out high -end vocals and discordant thrashing from start to finish. Every song is busy; there's almost too much going on to keep track, and as a result you hardly have time to breathe. Clear wax, screened covers, a poster, and two phenomenal bands...how can you go wrong? (WN)
(Don't Belong, PO Box 8035, 33200 Xixon, SPAIN, bannedinbcn@hotmail.com)

ELECTRIC EYE - "Electric Eye" EP

This record is great. So great that my old stereo on the milk crate which sits in my sparsely furnished apartment has cranked out this EP's raw rock power at overwhelmingly loud decibels (to my neighbors dismay ...but I don't like them anyway) everyday this week. Comparable to: MOONEY SUZUKI, VALENTINE KILLERS, and a dash of the lo-fi Rip Off records sound. If I were you, I'd buy this record. (AS)
(Vinyl Warning, PO Box 2991, Portland, OR., 97208-2991, www.vinylwarning.com)



END ON END - "Why Evolve When We Can Go Sideways?" LP

I can't tell if I like this yet. It sounds a lot like the new TWELVE HOUR TURN record, and I usually like when "screamo" (dammit, I hate using that word, but you give me no choice) bands get more melodic, but I'm not sure if there's enough to separate this record from the pack. They throw in the straight-forward punk beat every now and then, which adds some necessary variety, but I'm not sure if that is enough to make me fall in love with this. I could see it growing on me, though, especially if I saw them live. Give it a whirl. (MX)
(Substandard, PO Box 310, Berkeley, CA 94701, www.substandard.com)

ENGLISH DOGS - "This is Not a War?" CD

This is apparently a re-release of sorts, combining tracks from a mid 1990s 12" with a few demo tracks and live recordings of some classic ENGLISH DOGS songs. In their heyday, ENGLISH DOGS were a fucking brilliant punk band... a cross between GBH and MOTORHEAD; the four tunes on *To the Ends of the Earth* are stunning. They got progressively more rock until they sucked themselves into near oblivion sometime in the last decade, although who knows whether or not they ever bothered to call it quits. As for this record: Their new songs are watered down street punk ("Lay Down Your Arms" could be played at a high school dance, and no cheerleader would think anything of it); they absolutely ruin great songs by STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and RUDIMENTARY PENI; and the live tracks only serve as further proof that if ENGLISH DOGS never broke up, then their time is long over due. The guitar that used to drive the band now degenerates into "Look at me!" solos in nearly every song, and the songs are just plain boring. Fans of generic Warped Tour pop punk take notice. Fans of the ENGLISH DOGS avoid at all costs. (WN)
(Retch, 49 Rose Crescent, Woodvale, Southport, Merseyside, ENGLAND PR8 3RZ)

EU'S ARSE - "1981-1985" LP

625 has teamed up with Agipunk Classics to put out this EU'S ARSE reissue, which includes their *Lo Stato Ha Bisogno Di Te? Bene Fottilo* EP, their side of the split with IMPACT plus a couple of live songs. This is classic raw Italian punk rock. Raw distorted songs that hammer by as the singer howls his lungs out trying to rid himself of all that desperate rage. This comes with a full size black and white booklet that looks pretty good as well. Releases like this are essential for all you kids brushing up on your punk rock history lessons. Quality goods! (RC)
(625 Thrashcore, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413)

EVEN WORSE - "You've Ruined Everything" CD

From the band that is probably more known as having Jack Rabid of *Big Takeover* fame as a member (not a putdown), we have some unreleased recordings. A lost LP and a live show. Good hardcore/punk with a gal singer. A New York band circa 1980 who could be compared to SIN 34. This is a good release period not just for basement tape recordings. Worthwhile. (RL)
(Grand Theft Audio, 501 W. Glenoaks Blvd, PMB 313, Glendale, CA 91202)

EXAMINATION OF THE... - "We Are the Architects..." CD

If you can get past the art school layout, dramatic "*Buffy the Vampire S layer*-esque" lyrics, and four minute instrumental nonsense at the beginning of this CD you'll find that EXAMINATION OF THE... play some brutal fucking hardcore with crisp, clean sounding technical guitar work in the vein of DEADGUY, thrown in with heavy doses of blast beats to create a sound comparable to a hybrid of CONVERGE and JENNY PICCOLO. (VH)
(Forge Again, PO Box 146837, Chicago, IL 60614)

EXECRADORES - "Revolucionar O Cotidiano" EP

Positive anarcho-punk from S‹o Paulo. Like many records and 'zines of a similar political bent from the area, this package is really packed. It's crammed with information, in Portuguese and English, about nationalism, meat-eating, anarchy, and freedom. A reminder that the "sparse" aesthetic in punk is an emblem of privilege? It must be said that musically, this suffers from a hit-or-miss mix job—some of the melodies never quite catch up to the drummer and powerfully bellowed vocals deserve a stronger wall of sound than they receive here. But the spacey breakdowns and occasional folky vocal parts are, strangely, a plus. (AC)
(Esperanza Gravaciones A/C Josimas Ramos, Cedex Postal 22542, 04744-970, S‹o Paulo, BRAZIL)

FALLOUT - "Ontario" CD

Not to be confused with the English, US or Australian FALLOUT bands, this FALLOUT is from Canada and cranks out 14 rockin' ditties on their third release. FALLOUT delivers great political anthems with tasty guitar licks, powerful leads and animated vocals. Great disc. (HM)
(Red Menace, Ontario, CANADA,www.fallout.ca)

FAMILIA REAL - "Destruye/Depresion"

In this reissue, FAMILIA REAL sound like most typical French punk circa '82, save for that these guys use repetitious METAL URBAIN-style song structures —and of course, they're Spanish. While the B-side is a spare, haunting rocker, you'll be more interested in the A-side's brisk tempo and flesh-out guitars. An interesting, but not necessarily mandatory, rarity. (SS)
(Munster, Apro 1811Z, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN)

FIELDS OF FIRE - "Kill the Flock" EP

Anyone familiar with FIELDS OF FIRE's melodic youth crew sound might be a little surprised at the loads of melody and guitar leads added to their new material. At times I think they are striving for an early 80s Los Angeles sound, while at other times they remind me of REASON TO BELIEVE. Regardless, this new rockin' style makes tracks like "All That I Know" and "Going Nowhere" stand out. Matter of fact, the only thing that really bothered me about this record was the doubling up on the vocals. FIELDS OF FIRE fans will not be disappointed. (CC)
(Bockhorn, PO Box 10238, Beverly Hills, CA, 90213)

FIFTY NUTZ - "The Last Word" CD

More late 90s West Cost melodic hardcore-influenced fast emotional punk rock from Canada. Like a faster FACE TO FACE, but not as good as that sounds. Still, for what it is, it's not that bad. (AD)
(Union Local 2112, 78 Rachel East, Montreal, Quebec, H2W 1C6, CANADA)

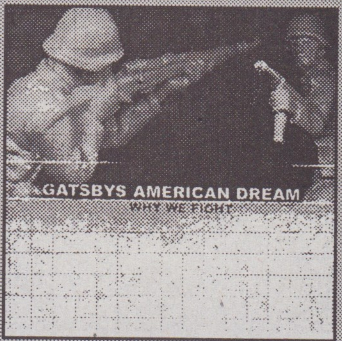
FLIPSIDES - "Clever One" LP

It's about time! I've been waiting for a full length for a while now from these guys. With re-recordings of some songs from their EP and some great new songs we have a great LP here! Great gal vocals with some strong power pop and rock and roll tunes that don't let up. Forget the going downhill MUFFS and all those retro clones, the FLIPSIDES have the spark and spirit that pushes them to the top of the heap damn quick. Killer! (RL)
(Pink and Black, PO 190516, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.theflipsides.com)

FORK KNIFE SPOON - "Black Stork Attack" EP

This is crust/grindcore in the same vein as HIS HERO IS GONE. Fast, metal tinged hardcore songs with heavy breakdowns. The first songs whispered vocals at the beginning that go into a wicked guitar part are a little cheesy, but oh well. It is good to see a band with lyrics that make sense and people can relate to (for me, the song about blaming killings on metal bands was great because I lived 15 minutes away from the spot of the so called SLAYER killings, at the time it happened). If you're into the heavy stuff then this is worth checking out. (PA)
(Born to Die, 29 East 10th St, Edmond, OK 730344, www.fork-knife-spood.com)

GATSBY'S AMERICAN DREAM - "Why We Fight" CD



Fearless records should really scoop these guys up. Imagine a skate punk/melodic hardcore version of INCUBUS. If you don't pay attention to major label bands, you're really not going to give a fuck about this band. If you do pay attention, there are a million bands like this but a hell of a lot better. Go find one. (MX)
(Rocketstar, PO Box 54108, Redondo, WA 98054, www.rocketstar.com)

GENETIC CONTROL - EP

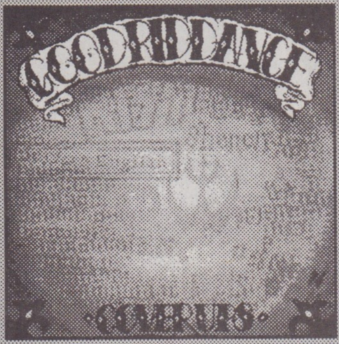
Boot of one of my all time favorite Canadian records from 1984. Pacy, catchy hardcore sounding more like their American neighbors than a lot of stuff coming out of Canada at the time. Sorta like the catchiness of TOXIC REASONS with the speed of early OFFENDERS with songs about Huxley's Brave New World and 1984...classic hardcore goods. This has one extra track the original doesn't which is a bonus, what isn't a bonus is the shoddy packaging. Why didn't the bootlegger scum keep the original cover (which is great) instead of slapping some ugly negative image of cops on it? The same bootlegger has butchered the covers of a load of other classic 80s records reviewed elsewhere...such a shame as this could have been a great series of much needed boots. (TB)
(Reagan Era Hardcore)

GENTLEMEN OF HORROR - "5 Song" EP

One of the holy grails of collector-scum heaven, many an unworthy non-bathing richie rich scumbag has sacrificed his time on Earth searching thrift bins in the Pacific Northwest and Canada for this sub-200-press Canuck obscurity. For once, the search was "worth it". Now, for your hard-earned $4 you get a totally garage-level genius EP of five great songs that move 'n' shake in that gone teenage loser tradition now being carried on by bands like the DISKORDS, HUL and those losers who practice next door to you. (RW)
(Bacchus Archives, POB 1975, Burbank, CA 91507)

GIVE UP - "Give Up" EP

Took a look at the letter included with the EP and it says that this band contains members of LIMP-



WRIST, DEVOID OF FAITH, and a couple of others. Though this release didn't live up to my suddenly high expectations, I still thought it was pretty good. Rock solid mid-pace to fast hardcore that has a dark and gloomy feel to the music and the growling vocals. Check it out if this sounds like your thing. (RC)
(Peter Walkee, PO Box 14794, Albany, NY 12212)

GLASS CANDY - "Love on a Plate/Johhny Are You Queer"
Ok, I'll confess, BLONDIE was at one point in time my favorite band under the stars, so I've totally got a place in my heart for glam new-wave-almost tough enough to be punk but not quite bands like this one. But I think that I've out grown the glam, and have come to terms with fucked up haircuts. I saw GLASS CANDY play with the GOSSIP in somebody's living room, and lets just say that I really wanted to have fun, but GLASS CANDY couldn't keep the ball rolling for me. If they just ditched the glam and got dirty, we could all forget about the sweat stains and step on each other's toes. One way or another, it really comes down to the rock factor, not eye candy. Duh. Regardless of their stilettos, and hairspray, I think that this is a pretty good release. I hope they realize that they're messing with the great forces of DEBBIE HARRY. (MM)
(no address)

GLASSEATER - CD
This is one of those bands whose name I suddenly start hearing every fucking day, usually in the context of jokes that my friends make that I don't get. Well, I've heard it and I must say that I get it now. These "bros" sound like NEW FOUND GLORY with some terribly out of place "cookie-monster" back up vocals. Sorry, not feeling it. The one redeeming feature was that some dude named J.C. thanks "the REAL J.C. for his guidance, love and protection." If he's talking about that Jesus dude, that's fucking hilarious. If not, I will continue to believe that he is. (MX)
(Fearless, 13772 Golden West 545, Westminster, CA 92683, www.fearlessrecords.com)

GOOD RIDDANCE- "Cover Ups" CD
The fact that this release tickled me pink makes me think that it's fun, at least for the entertainment factor. Would I ever rock this record at a moment of intense creativity or emotion? Probably not. But who cares? GOOD RIDDANCE probably had a bottle crashing, flashback, make-out in the back of your car, dance party of a time putting this little ditty together. Featuring the covers of the likes of KISS, BLACK FLAG, MODERN ENGLISH, and my personal favorite, the SHANGRI-LAS, this release is both eclectic and hilarious. That's why we all learn to read guitar tabs, right? (MM)
(Lorelei, PO Box 902 Santa Cruz, CA 95061)

THE GRANDPRIXX- "....Drive Me Crazy" CD
I guess it's still fun for bands to do the whole SCREECHING WEASEL thing, but one would hope that this band wouldn't be such a bunch of meat heads. I can't help but imagine myself waiting for hours in the burning sun for a ride at an over priced amusement park, and the GRANDPRIXX being the soundtrack. How many songs can you write about girls, and name drop MTX at the same time? Please don't torture me. (MM)
(Fork In Hand, PO Box 230023 Boston, MA 02123)

THE GREAT CLEARING OFF - "Within This Inch, We Are Free" EP
Four songs of sincerity-core from Philly. Throaty monotone hardcore vocals sit nicely on solid, catchy mid-tempo tunes. Additional vocals on side b get to that high-pitched new school near-hysteria, and it works. They wisely lay off art and dogma, relying instead on sweaty basement, circle-of-friends-style energy. Good stuff. (AC)
(Cheap Art, PO Box 2101, Philadelphia, PA 19103, thegreatclearingoff@hotmail.com)

THE GREAT REDNECK HOPE - "Why Humans Think Computers Can't" EP
Four songs of hardcore with a heavy metal influence (I mean it is heavily influenced by metal, not just that it is influenced by heavy metal). It also has an emo influence, and I'm not talking about that GET UP KIDS bullshit. So anyway, musically it's hardcore emo that is heavy on the chugga chugga and wanky guitar fills that are so much a part of metal. The music in itself makes for a powerful, driving recording but the songs are hindered by a vocalist that is trying to push his vocals too hard. The singer is too raspy and high pitched to really fit the music. The lyrics are also disappointing. When I see a song called "Abortion Doesn't Kill Babies, I Do," I expect to get blown away by some crude and offensive lyrics and not some vague emotive crap. (PA)
(Soulless Lemming, PO Box 25903, Colorado Springs, CO 80936, thegreatredneckhope@hotmail.com)

HASKELS - "Taking the City by Storm" EP
An unauthorized reissue of one of those cherished late 70s punk/pop singles that garners high prices on Internet auction sites and record swaps...the HASKELS were a punchy trio that consisted of Prez, Vodie and Bobby Haskel, and hailed from Milwaukee—home of CHEAP TRICK, with whom they were friendly. The title track is the big hit, but "Baby Let's French" is funny, juvenile and driven by surging hormones...like most inductees in the Killed by Death of fame, the band never got what they had coming to them. Pay $435 on eBay, or grab the bootleg if you stumble across it. (JH)
(no address)

HEADHUNTERS - "Escape the Grave" EP
This is quality Oi!/streetpunk with all the members of legendary Swedish skinhead band ULTIMA THULE. These guys are worshipped in their native land and have stood the test of time well. The title cut "Escape the Grave" only hints at the power these guys possess. After the slow and melodic introduction the HEADHUNTERS fucking drop the ordinance on you with "Headhunter's Theme." Flip the EP over and you get a real good skinhead anthem called—appropriately enough—"Skinhead Time." The music is sung in English with good chugging guitar work. This is a refreshing anomaly—a veteran skinhead band from the eighties that still plays good music! No nostalgia needed! Get this disc! (BR)
(Haunted Town, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169, Chicago, IL 60647)

HELLNATION - "Dynamite Up Your Ass" LP
Twenty-one songs, 45 rpm, insane drumming, guitars set on annihilate, blown out recording, manic

vocals—you know the fucking deal. In a world of poseurs and trend jumpers HELLNATION remains vigilant to its mission to deliver full blast hardcore thrash mayhem—even on this, their catchiest album yet! Hell, you can almost hum along to some of the songs—almost! Absolutely pulverizings! (MT)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

HERE KITTY KITTY - "Daddy's Girl" CD
This sounds like something one of my ex-girlfriends would have recorded. Cutesy girl pop punk. I actually dig it. Reminds me a little of the SKIRTS, RIFF RANDALS (the Sacramento girls), CHUBBIES and HISSYFITS. Sassy and fun. The production could have been a little cleaner and more powerful but the songs are all pretty solid. (BM)
(Lorelei, PO Box 902, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, www.loreleirecords.com, herekittykittyrocks@yahoo.com)

HOMETEAM - "Time and Place" CD
Sometimes these guys sound like BLINK. Sometimes they sound like the GET UP KIDS. Sometimes in between. Cool! Because this is one infectious poppy punk record. Very solid. If da kids hear this they will eat it up. Canadian? A definite top ten-er. (RL)
(Rocketstar Recordings, www.rocket-star.com)

HUMUNGUS - "I Hate Mother Fucking Cops" CD
Speedy, raw, and snotty punk rock from these vets of punk rock wars from times past. For those who don't know, HUMUNGUS features one Nicki Sicki (VERBAL ABUSE, SICK PLEASURE) and one Cheetah Chrome (DEAD BOYS), and while none of this packs the wallop of their prior efforts, this is pretty fucking solid shit here. Good to see the so called old timers keeping it real and staying true. (MT)
(Beer City, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035)

HUNCHES - "Got Some Hate/Lost Time Frequency"
Raw, screamy punk-n-blues raunch by this Northwest-based rock band. "Lost Time Frequency" is the winner here. Kinda brief for a 7", gimmie that 3rd track. (RW)
(In The Red)

I FARM - "Two Selected Works" CD
I FARM was a pretty brilliant band in my opinion—total ripping fast melodic punk in the I SPY meets early PROPAGANDHI vein, complete with snotty vocals and biting lyrics. This CD combines their Sincerely, Robots LP with their Learning Russian With I Farm EP. Smashing stuff! (MT)
(Traffic Violation, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY 11733)

INFEST - "No Man's Slave" LP
Question: "Where's the Unity?" Answer: "Holy shit! previously unreleased INFEST recordings from 1995 are every bit as intense and amazing as the *Slave* LP!" These are some of the most savage, cruel, harsh and completely destructive (and completely perfect) songs your ears will ever hear. Listening to this record is like jumping off a bridge with hundreds of fish hooks attached firmly into your eye lids, lips, ears, nose, hands, feet, and torso, ripping your body apart piece by piece leaving nothing but your bloody bones to break against the water 40 seconds later. Get ready to die. (VH)
(Deep Six)

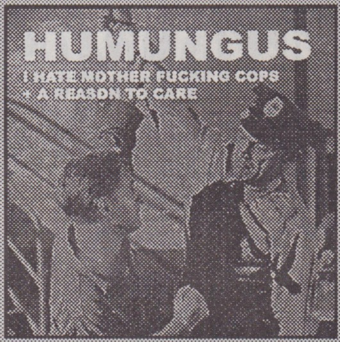
INFEST - "1987 Demo" LP
If you are not familiar with INFEST, they were a super fast hardcore band that was around from the late eighties until the mid-nineties. They were a great band lyrically, musically and I will assume that they were a great live band as well. They were highly influential to many of the fast, rough hardcore bands that we enjoy today. This LP is a reproduction of the demo tape which they recorded in 1987. Some of the songs off the demo have been released on various records in the past, but this is the first record I know of that has released the entire demo. The sound quality is very good with a little variation throughout, like what I imagine the tape would have sounded like. Although most of these songs were rerecorded later in the bands career, this would be a fun record to own if you were a big INFEST fan. Although this is a bootleg, it is very nicely packaged with lyrics, photos, and a lot of flyers for shows that I wish I had been at (especially INFEST, BORN AGAINST, RORSCHACH, DOWNCAST, HEROIN, and CROSSED OUT at Che Cafe. Wow! (WR)
(no address)

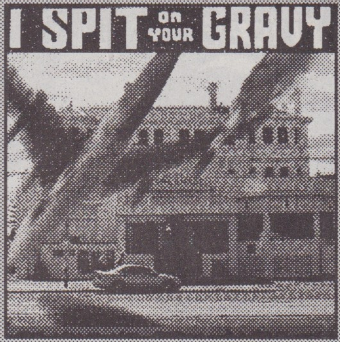
I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVY - "St. Kilda's Still Alright!" CD
This is a collection of the GRAVY'S *St. Kilda's Alright* EP, a few comp tracks, and a few hits off *Fruit Loop City* from a live performance in 2001?!!! These crazy Aussies have some awfully silly tunes and an awesome CD booklet full of comics, old flyers, and newspaper articles of their antics. Demented genius! (HM)
(Turkeyneck, 1/73 Vulture St., West End Qld 4101, AUSTRALIA, turkeyneck77@hotmail.com)

JAG OFFS/FOUR LETTER WORDS - "Slack Mafia!" split LP
The JAG OFFS deliver a gritty, head boppin' down home punk. There's a female lead singer and a male lead singer that split the songs, but a few thrash songs feature both singers, sounding like the late great band: MASTURBATION. FOUR LETTER WORDS also have great snotty vocals with funny, abrasive themes and lyrics. Absurd, immature and delightful! (HM)
(Geykido Comet, P.O. Box 3743, Laguna Hills, CA 92654, www.gcrecords.com)

JAWBREAKER – "Etc" 2xLP
Love em' or hate them, this double LP collects JAWBREAKER's demo, singles, and compilation tracks in one lovely little place. Arranged chronologically, *Etc.* is one stellar album, that highlights the metamorphis of the band as they progressed through time. Intelligent, introspective, and with their share of piss and vinegar, JAWBREAKER always delivered for me. A simple must have. (JF)
(Blackball, 2745 16th St., San Francisco, CA 94103, www.blackballrecords.com)

JIM JACOBI & THE JOJAKIMBI BAND - "I'm Datin' Satan" CD
Gee, I hate giving really bad reviews. Hypothetically, you've got a CD put out by someone who used to be vital, say in a subterranean *KBD*-kind of way, say 15-20 years ago, and insists on putting out records today.





Again, hypothetically, this CD would be a conglomeration of every opening-band-in-a-college-bar-on-$1-beer-night cliché, just a plodding mass of style-hopping, workmanlike technical competence. I would really hate to obscure past accomplishments by stomping said CD into aluminum powder fit for recycling into a PATSY CLINE or CLASSIX NOUVEAU CD. *Sheesh.* Well, I'm pressing play now...(RW)
(Kahuna, 1253 Jonna Ct., Lincoln, NE 68522)

JOHN LENIN - "This Is the One" EP
Press sheet states: "Outstanding Powerpop/Punk Debut -Single by the new band of Admiral James T..Energetic played Popsongs with the power of Punkrock." That might have been what they were aiming for, but there's one not especially powerful (the murky production doesn't help) pop song and the other 75% sounds like so-so pop punk. (DD)
(Sprinter, Schwizerstr. 2, CH-8810 Uster, SWITZERLAND, www.sprinterrecords.ch.vu)

KILLED IN ACTION - "Exit Wounds" CD
It's a good fucking sign when I hear shouts of "LET'S FUCKING GO!" multiple times on an album. KILLED IN ACTION, from Columbus, Ohio, dish out 15 tracks of '88 style HC guitar parts buried beneath blast beats in the tradition of INFEST, with layers of raw, intense, chaotic screaming thrown on top. This CD release includes their 7", split w/CRUCIAL UNIT, demo, and comp tracks. The demo songs are my favorite of all the stuff on this release and make it worth the extra few bucks you'd save buying the EP. (VH)
(Get The Axe, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126)

THE KILLEREST EXPRESSION - "Four Days That Shook the World" CD
Melodic pop punk from the UK here with emo overtones on the guitar front. The tight playing and riffing fuel this with a SNUFF quality. Although I could use a little more singing over screaming with the vocals, some may enjoy the power. A good release. (RL)
(In At The Deep End, www.inatthedeependrecords.co.uk)

KILL YOUR IDOLS - LP
This band is pretty predictable...but damn good with it. I've always thought of them as the Fat Records band of the hardcore scene; super crisp, well played and appealing to the kids. It's tough, yet catchy and well produced. It has a real Boston feeling to it, with the vocals sounding like Choke SLAPSHOT (they do a great cover of "Step On It") meets IMPACT UNIT. The testosterone level is a bit high for me, but the sweaty shirtless hardcore boys will be all over it I'm sure. (TB)
(Reflections, Spoorwegstraat 117, 6828 AP, Arnhem, NETHERLANDS)

KORO - "700 Club" EP
Amazing hardcore from '83! Original pressing of 300 narrowly missed vanishing into the obscurity of moldy Goodwill record bins, and is back from the grave in, ah yes, bootleg form. Totally obscure collector scum stuff... you may recognize KORO from tracks on the *A Compilation dedicated to Tim Yohannon* LP, and *the Killed by Hardcore #2* LP. Here's the 700 Club EP in its entirety. These are fucking great songs. American hardcore at it's finest. (VH)
(Reagan Era HC)

KUNG FU RICK/ULTIMATE WARRIORS - split EP
The KUNG FU RICK song on this EP is a bit different from their other material in that it is quite long and with a lot more variety (a good or bad thing, depending on your taste.) Never the less, this is good technical, crossover hardcore with some interesting parts. the ULTIMATE WARRIORS, on the other hand, blast away nine wailers on this one 7" and grind hard in a DISCORDANCE AXIS-meets-SPAZZ sort of way. Great production and some pretty funny samples. A cool record, but ULTIMATE WARRIORS definitely wins the war here. (SP)
(Robotic Empire, 12001 Aintree Ln., Reston, VA 20191, www.roboticempire.com)

LRF - "The Roughs & the Smooths" CD
Boring non-tempo Japanese oi. Two questions: Firstly, how do you include the SPECIALS, the CLASH, the DUBLINERS, DESMOND DEKKER, SKREWDRIVER, NO REMORSE, and BRUTAL ATTACK all on the same thanks/inspiration list? No really, I wanna know! I can just imagine these guys sitting around the house saying "Éthat Desmond Dekker record was pretty cool, but y'know what I'd love to hear right now—some fucking SKREWDRIVER!" Where the fuck are these guys' heads at? Secondly, isn't Asian people paying tribute to white supremacists, I don't know—stupid? (AD)
(no address)

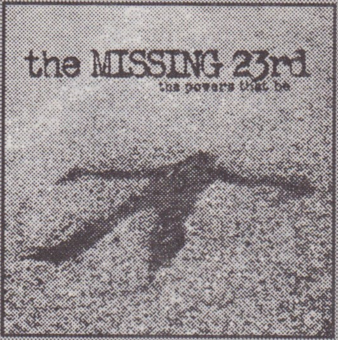
LAB RATS/SCISSORHANDS – split LP
Talk about fucking punk rock!!! SF's LAB RATS come out kicking and screaming with some major league level punk on this split release. These teenagers have been kicking the shit out of the local scene for sometime and it is nice to see their passion and energy successfully captured onto vinyl. Powerful, passionate, and fast with melodic underpinnings, the LAB RATS just rule. SCISSORHANDS unfortunately don't succeed so well. While they play with passion, they just sound like they are trying to hard to be AFI. This is especially true with the vocals and the trying to sound spooky parts. Not entirely bad, but not that good either. Still totally a deal for the LAB RATS side alone. (JF)
(Left Off The Dial, PO Box 3941, Oakland, CA 94609)

LIFE IS A LIE - "O'Nova Pagao" CD
Whoa! I love it when I put on a CD of a band that I have never heard before and they totally knock me back in my seat. This is blazing fucking grindcore that will make your ears bleed and your eyes water. There are just enough tempo changes to keep things interesting and make those blast beat parts sound even harsher. And there are two vocalists growling and barking over the hammering drums and metal guitar riffs. The production is top notch on this and it all sounds really thick and heavy. This Brazillian band is a must hear for all you grindheads! (RC)
(Laja, Caixa Postal 25519, Vila, Velha/ES, CEP: 29102*973, BRASIL, laja.cjb.net)

LIMBONAUTAS - "Rendam-Se Humanos!!!" CD
Surf music with vocals, but these guys have more going for them than most of the surf bands out there. They play really fast and they sing in a language I don't understand. The sound is catchy, but seems like a parody of surf music at the same time. I think these guys probably have a great sense of humor about what they are doing. (CK)
(limbonautas@yahoo.com)

LONG TALL SHORTY - "Completely Perfect" 2xLP
......Detour Records....please have sex with me...RIGHT NOW!!!! Two whole LPs worth of late 70s power pop mod queerboy action with all the juicy trimmings.....mmmmmm, yuuuummm!!!!!! Manzo, manzo....I'll tell you this though, I think LONG TALL SHORTY gives the JAM a run for their money....!!!!! These Brit butt-pumps can get pretty punk at times....when they're not riding a Magic Bus....oh, where are they now???? I sat through all four sides of this collection and I'll have to say that my male vagina is damp.....not a bad slice on either platter!!!!!!!! Full color cover and loads of pix for all you girls who dig lily white skin and pimples on homely English mugs....hell, I'm brewing up masturbation fantasies of my own right now....like dipping my Yankee ding-dong in a glass of English milk.......!!!!! Two dicks up for Detour!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (SW)
(Detour, PO Box 18, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9YU, UK, www.detour.co.uk)

LOOSE CHANGE - "God Save the Scene" CDEP
It makes me so very very happy to hear good melodic hardcore bands. There are literally thousands of awful ones, and it's so nice when some good stuff slips in there. LOOSE CHANGE do the "whoa-oh" back up vocals, and they do the Fat Wreck beat, but they manage to also inject some DILLINGER FOUR bits, all with vocals that have that gruff quality that lets you know that they really fucking mean it. Too many bands in this genre think that they can get by on actually singing. That just makes the whole package sound slick and boring. Bravo for getting it right. (MX)
(Out of Step, PO Box 509, Vineburg, CA 95487, www.oosrecords.com)



LOVEJUNK _ "Vodatumour Blues" CD
Five tracks recorded at various times from these UK pop punkers. Out of the same scene that brought us MEGA CITY 4 and the SENSELESS THINGS, these odds and ends continue in that sound. A good in-between-LP's release. (RL)
(In At The Deep End, www.inatthedeependrecords.co.uk)

MERDA - "Curticao dos Jovens!" CD
These Brazilians spend 25 tracks making me laugh with their fuzzed out fast paced goofy hardcore, and with songs like "Satan's Barbie," "Fuck You Before," and "I Love Japanese Bands," what's not to like? You'll spend almost as much time deciphering the full color cut and paste lyric poster as you will listening to the disc. The music brings to mind bands like YOUR MOTHER, or perhaps FYP on loads of crack. Prepare to act like a kid, farting around the house in your underwear, this disc is a blast! (WN)
(Laja Rakords, caixa postal 25519, Vila Velha - ES, CEP: 29102-973, BRASIL)

THE MESSIES - "'77-'99" EP
I like music that has a quick pace, yet remains catchy. I like music that is catchy without being wimpy. The Germans are good at accomplishing this. (Some of my best friends are German, so I can say this.) The record indicates, I think, that these were recorded somewhere between '77 and '99. I think they're trying to make a point, rather than being truly factual. Point well taken. What you've got here is punk rock that is highly melodic and catchy and faster paced, but still retains the spirit of '77 punk. If you're a fan of that very German style of punk rock that c combines a quick pace, some spirit and still catchy, you should look for this. I will. (KK)
(Sprinter, Neuwiesenstr. 27, CH-8610 Uster, SWITZERLAND)

MISSING 23RD - "The Powers that Be" CD
This is a re-issue of their first LP that came out on Mankind Records. When this record first came out, a lot of people pegged this band as a wannabe DAG NASTY or MINOR THREAT. While they do borrow heavily from both bands, they also remind me of an early IGNITION, especially on the tracks "Struggle," "21," "Bring It On Down," and "From Within." Whether this was intentional or not, those tracks are the reason I think this record was their best output. Available at your nearest mall record store. (CC)
(Sessions, 15 Janis Wy, Scotts Valley, CA 95066)

THE MONROES - "Kiss Your Elbow Goodbye" EP
Country twanged punky rockabilly. It's ok, but I would prefer more energy kicked into this one. Boys, get out there and start living life. Get your hands dirty. (CK)
($4 ppd.; Speed! Nebraska, PO Box 3103, Omaha, NE 68103, speednebr@yahoo.com)

MOONEY SUZUKI - "Oh Sweet Susanna/Say Man, What Time Is It?"
The irony. As I walked into the *MRR* house just moments ago, there was one of those discussions going on about the recent popularity of so-called garage rock. When asked my opinion, I just shrugged. What could I say? The shit the masses are gobbling up and calling garage rock isn't what I'd call garage rock. Then I have this to review. I just don't get it. Having seen these guys live, I simply call them poseurs with their over-rehearsed rock moves. This record bares more resemblance to 70s stadium rock than any type of garage rock. Yuck. (CK)
(Gammon, 111 E. 14th ST, #179, New York, NY 10003)

MUKEKA DI RATO - CD
Fast hardcore punk rock from Brazil. Twenty four songs in less than a half hour occupy this CD, and you know what? They are all listenable. I wish I could I could understand or read Portugese, because than I would probably really enjoy this disc. As it is I played it three times in a row and said this is pretty damn good. (JF)
(Laja, C.P. 25519, Vila Velha/ES, CEP 29102-973, BRAZIL, laja@altavista.net)

MY FAVORITE CHORD - "Red Eyed Reality" CDEP

I like this band probably more than I should, mostly because their vocals stray out of tune sometimes and because their label name is a MISFITS reference. They play pop punk with a whole bunch of melodic leads and backing vocals that almost sound like synthesizers at times. I mean, they're definitely one of those bands that relies more on regurgitation that actual creativity, but they seem more sincere than a lot of those other assholes. (MX)

(Horror Business, Im Drubbel 6, 44534 Lunen, GERMANY, www.horrorbiz.de)

MYSTERY GIRLS - CD

More rocking, rolling, and outta-controlling from a band of rebels with a creative itch and access to an electrical outlet. The MYSTERY GIRLS have a large, live sound that isn't hampered by digital reproduction, tracks like "Hit Me Again," "Finger on the Grain," or "Meet Me Now" are with several decades worth of fuzz, and the band play with the kinda verve that isn't beholden to a time, place, or cultural climate. Sleazing and pleasing R&B infused with the kind of punk urgency you've come to expect and demand. The occasional vocal crack only adds to the cumulative effect. Raucous good times are had by all. Who are the MYSTERY GIRLS (really)? Find out for yourself. (JH)

(Trick Knee, PO Box 12714, Green Bay, WI 54307, www.trickkneeproductions.com)

NEAR MISS - "The Gentle Art" CD

Someone's been going through the dumpster round the back of Fat Wreck Chords. (AD)

(Fearless, 13772 Goldenwest St. #545, Westminster, CA 92683)

NEON CHRIST - "Parental Suppression" EP

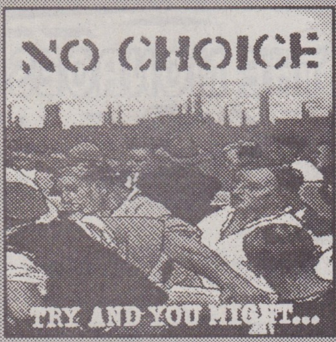
Atlanta's favorite sons first EP gets the bootleg treatment, good to see this stuff available again. Rippingly fast American style hardcore circa 1984. The rock influence is very evident, providing carefully crafted hooks which set them apart from much of the blender-on-full-blast set. Current students of the thrash revival would do well to study this artifact from the past. Premium hardcore here. (MT)

(Reagan Era HC)

THE NEW BREED - "Day to Day" CD

A very mediocre street-punk album with uninteresting songs and terrible vocals. (SR)

(Blind Beggar, Bogenstr. 25, D-66957 Eppenbrun, GERMANY, www.oirecords.com)



NIGEL PEPPER COCK - "The New Way" LP

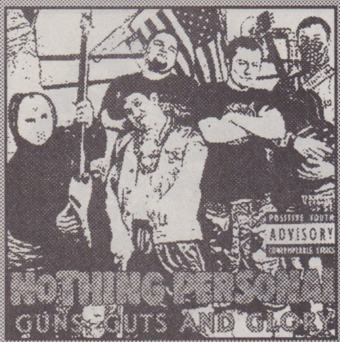
Finally, an LP from the Bay Area's finest purveyors of metallic hardcore swathed in homo-porn imagery. If you don't like to look at pictures of hot studs in full arousal mode, or listen to wall-of-sound metal replete with orchestral keyboard chaos, you best move on to the next review, Chauncey. Lyrically, just about every song on this record skewers another musical sacred cow: 70s Camaro rock, streetpunk, psychedelia, gutter-punk, and even CRASS all get the COCK treatment. You'll pick this up for the pictures, but you'll end up playing it again and again for the music. Go on, treat yourself, it's the feel good album of the summer. FUCK SLUTS NOT WHORES. (AM)

(Life Is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620; www.lifeisabuse.com)

NO CHOICE - "Don't and You Most Surely Won't!" CD

Old band from the UK—Wales to be more precise. They had a EP out on Riot City in the early 80s and managed to fit in nicely alongside both the "No Future" bands and the anarcho bands of the day. If I said they were kind of a punker stripped-down OMEGA TRIBE or ZOUNDS it would pique your interest, wouldn't it? Well, that's how I'd best describe them. It's a shame that they never released an album at the time—they would have made it onto the back of my jacket any day... Now, thanks to a nice bit of digging by Grand Theft Audio all the demos (and the EP) are available on CD, putting NO CHOICE in their rightful place alongside the PARTISANS, ICONS OF FILTH, COWBOY KILLERS, and FOUR LETTER WORD in the Welsh Punk Rock Hall of Fame. What a cool release. (AD)

(Grand Theft Audio, 501 W. Glenoaks Blvd. Ste. 313, Glendale, CA 91202)



NOTHING PERSONAL - "Guns, Guts and Glory" CD

You know, I don't really find bands that spout homophobic, sexist, and patriotic lyrics like this one particularly offensive or funny. I just end up thinking they are pathetic. As expected, they try to weasel their way out of the hole that they put themselves in by playing the race card. They have a little picture of a guy kicking a swastika on the back of the CD cover, as if they are saying "hey man, regardless of how you interpret our lyrics, we are still alright because we aren't racist." But you know, they have an anti-welfare song that reeks of racism, so I wouldn't be so sure of that either. If you are still with me on this, then expect some mediocre fast hardcore played with an East Coast flair. Lame and a waste of time! (RC)

(NGS, PO Box 334, Westmont, IL 60559, www.ngsrecords@attbi.com)

OFFENDERS - "Died In Custody" CD

Gee Mr. Grand Theft Audio, did you get a bankruptcy settlement from Rotz or something? You're putting out one great CD after another, and here's another one... a comp of these early 80s Texas hardcore heroes. While not of totally top rank originality, the OFFENDERS were still solid as a rock early/mid 80s hardcore with political lyrics. Their track from the *P.E.A.C.E.* comp is indicative of what they're all about. Just looking at their reproduced flyers in the booklet made me realize how utterly lame modern flyer art is in comparison. (RW)

(Grand Theft Audio, 501 West Glenoaks Blvd. PMB 313, Glendale, CA 91202)

OFFENDERS - "We Must Rebel" EP

This is weird, it's not a bootleg, no it is a bootleg, it's not a reissue...but it is kinda. What you get is the classic OFFENDERS EP from fuck, '83? But the tracks are all mixed up (and there's no "No Chance") and it's on a 7." It's cool but I'd go for the CD put out by GTA this month. (AD)

(Reagan Era HC)

LOS OLVIDADOS - "Listen to This!!! LP

Let me tell you something. When you wade through piles of shit that just seem to get deeper as time goes by...hearing an album like this nails you like a sledgehammer stroke to the chest. Los O were one of the best, and most underrated, hardcore bands to come out of the early 80s, period. Great songs, raw, snotty vocals, some smoking guitar...all you need for a good time. Kudos to Alt. Tentacles for reissuing a bunch of this great skate rock. So pop it in the box, grab a six pack, and head for the shallow end, and crack one for Ruben. This is the shit.....live it. (DL)

(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)

OMEGA CINCO/POINT OF FEW - split EP

I saw a bit of OMEGA CINCO at Gilman last month and thought they were pretty interesting: Extremely energetic, fun, spazzy hardcore sounding much like ANTIOCH ARROW, ANGEL HAIR and the like. Their songs on this split are pretty fucking rad with plenty of hooks and some great vocals (Did I mention its the ex-singer of E-150?) The Netherlands' POINT OF FEW takes more of a straight forward, hard-hitting approach with a totally raw thrashy sound and vocals making me want to tear my hair out or something. Top notch stuff by both bands making for a great split of International proportions (literally.) (SP)

(Ozono Kids, PO Box 627, Manresa 08240, BCN, SPAIN)

ON TRIAL - "Higher!/That's Right"

Why? I know I am in a bad mood today, but do I really need to be tortured? Hard rock for punkers who drink too much. I'll give them that excuse. I hate guitar solos as much as I hate proficient guitarists. (CK)

(Bad Afro)

OVER IT - "Timing Is Everything" CD

Another strong release from these SoCal boys. This melodic stuff could certainly be labeled as a Fat/Epitaph type band, but these guys do it right. In fact, musically with the tight riffing going on this reminds me a lot of LEATHERFACE, although the vocals are much smoother than Frankie's. A pretty great release! (RL)

(Lobster, PO Box 1473, Santa Barbara, CA 93102, www.overitonline.com)

OS PEDREROS - "Hard Rock Dreams" CD

Fun Brazilian pop punk that can get aggressive when needed. I don't really know what else to say. They seem really passionate about what they are doing which is good but I dunno, it gets old to me after a while. These bands all beginning to sound the same to me after a while, snotty, juvenile and loud can only go so far. (BM)

(Laja, Caixa Postal 25519, Vila Velhas/ES, CEP: 29102-973, BRASIL, laja@altavista.net)

THE PAUKI - "HACKBOZb" CD

Great sing along punk from Russia. The PAUKI have been around for years, and have several releases under their belts (perhaps you read the MRR interview a few months ago?). Think along the lines of CITIZEN FISH, SNUFF or other upbeat European punks. I'm guessing that the songs are about having fun, as that is certainly the feeling you get from the disc, and the only song with lyrics in English, "Harley Davidson," is fucking hilarious. It might be hard to track this stuff down in Western countries, but it is certainly worth the effort. (WN)

(Neuroempire c/o Shemetova T,N., PO Box 58 123100, Moscow, RUSSIA, pauki@nm.ru)

THE PAUKI - "Apakoha" CD

OK, I gave the CD title my best shot. After some translation help and figuring out the name of the band, I got down to giving this release a spin. Musically, they have a low-key somber feel to their music. Some of it is mid-tempo new wave, with a slightly dark edge to it that brought to mind JOY DIVISION. The other songs are more upbeat punk numbers, with a faster pace and yelled vocals. Intriguing release from this Russian band. (RC)

(Anton, no address)

PEGGIO PUNX - "Discography" 2xCD

76 tracks in total this double CD set compiles the complete works of one of my favorite Italian hardcore punk bands. While not as full on raging as RAW POWER and not quite as insane sounding as WRETCHED, PEGGIO PUNX wrote catchy hook-laden, yet tense and hectic songs very much in the style which made so much Italian hardcore so classic. Disc one compiles their seven and twelve inch EPs with their demos. Disc two contains 36 tracks of surprisingly listenable live records from varying venues throughout their history. An essential piece of punk rock history. Listen, learn and then apply to your own band! *Non Siamo Come Voi*! (MT)

(SOA, via Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, ITALIA, soarecords@libero.it)

PERKELE - "No Shame" CD

Patriotism is stupid no matter what country is waving the flag, it divides and separates and has no place in the punk scene. These Swedish skins are all about being proud to be skins, fighting and waving their country's flag "I want to fly the flag/With my head held high/I'm fighting back/For the colors of my land." Aside from the knucklehead lyrics, this band kick out some pretty decent tuneful oi with chanted backups and gruff vocals. But you know what? You can stick this CD up your arse wrapped up in your flag you morons... (TB)

(Blind Beggar, Bogenstr 25, D-66957 Eppenbrum, GERMANY)

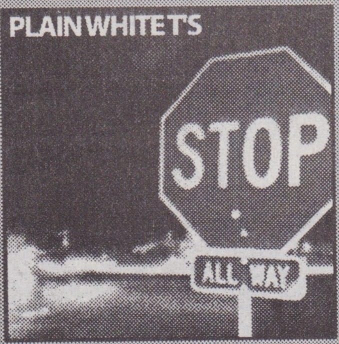
PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES - "Soberphobia" CD

I'll let you into a guilty secret....I'm a huge TEST TUBE BABIES fan. Their 1983 *Loud Blaring Punk Rock* LP is snotty punk rock toilet humor genius. This CD is a reissue of their 1987 LP with an earlier 12" tacked on for good measure and in comparison to their early stuff this sucks. It's total rock with keyboards in places, without any of the snarl that made their early stuff so great. There is the odd moment like "The Spirit of Keith Moon," and "Alcohol," but for the most part this sucks. (TB)

(Captain Oi, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA, UK)

PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES - "Supermodels" CD

I'm all for bands re-releasing their classics on CD (especially since my Mum back home threw out all my records—my fault, I'm a terrible son) but for PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES I'm not sure I would go further than the first two (*Mating Sounds* and *Loud Blaring Punk*) albums, but here the TEST TUBES go ahead and prove me to be the ignoramus that I am, as this is an enjoyable listen. Not as hilarious as their earlier shit, there's no "Student Wankers" or "Transvestite"s here, but it's still good nonetheless. They even manage to write some great socially conscious lyrics; to wit: "So you are giving up drinking, You're giving up fun. You're staying at home now, And getting things done. So you've given up drinking, Well that's up to you. You know too much thinking, It ain't good for you..." Listen to your elders! (AD)
(Captain Oi!)



PLAIN WHITE T'S - "Stop" CD

If you were thinking that this was another one of those bands that mixes elements of the GET UP KIDS with elements of major label pop punk, you would be right. In a lot of ways, they resemble radio-darlings-of-the-moment JIMMY EAT WORLD in that you probably find yourself humming it but you haven't the faintest idea why. I like catchy music, but this lacks that certain something that removes the shame from having their songs stuck in your head. Maybe it's the fact that the lyrics are totally unoriginal. Yeah, that seems like it. (MX)
(Fearless, 13772 Golden West 545, Westminster, CA 92683, www.fearlessrecords.com)

PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES - "Speakers Push the Air" EP

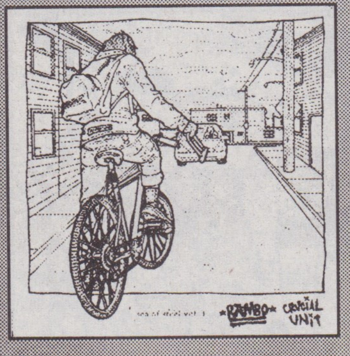
I was a huge fan of the 12" EP that this band released last year on Sound Virus, so I was highly anticipating the next release for some time. This single (and the other two singles released on Hand Held Heart, Sound Virus, and the combined collection of all three on Lookout!) fully live up to my expectations of just how good this band is. The title track is especially reminiscent of DISCOUNT-esque melody, but with a more driving song structure more going on instrumentally. A great song to say the very least. The two songs on the B-side are a little less direct and showcase a bit more of this dueling angular guitar sound (making me think of any number of Tony Joy projects) banging right up against the vocals (though a bit distracting at times). Despite whatever review PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES gets in *MRR* they're going to be enormous, and in fact the title track of this EP is already getting MTV2 airplay... So where do we stand now? (SP)
(Dim Mak, PO Box 14041, Santa Barbara, CA 93107, www.dimmak.com)

PSEUDO EXISTORS - "Stamp Out Normality!" LP

....wow....an old, ugly old English punk rock band from '79.....boy oh boy....!!!!! What you got here is another one of those punk-a-dunk-a archive records......there's tons of 'em out...that's cuz punk rock is history now.....like Buddy Holly.....or better yet, the ROLLING STONES....!!!!! Original punk records these days go for more than the most expensive BEATLES collectors items and at this point getting just as boring as Eric Clapton.....!!!!! Punk is sooooo normal these days that it's almost invisible.....!!!!! But let's not go there.....let's talk about this slab of dick meat..... it's actually a pretty good record.....very snotty, very English.....the sound quality is good but the live shit is terrible.....I can almost give the same review to every single one of these types of records.... (SW)
(Harbinger, harbingersound@lineone.net)

QUEEN COBRA - "Queen Cobra" LP

QUEEN COBRA is an all female band with lo-fi guitar, hoarse throat vocals, and, believe it or not, a drum machine!? This release is pretty damn cool. Hesitatingly, I'm gonna stick it in the garage rock genre (only cuz it reminds me a bit of AEROBITCH), but I'm not sure if it really fits there. To tell ya the truth, I'm not sure where it fits, but this LP stands way out from what I've being hearing lately in punk land. Any time a punk band pulls out a drum machine they seem to enter a new realm. Nonetheless, despite this record's computerized drummer, it still retains a cool DIY feel. I imagine these folks sitting around in a kitchen with a Fender Strat, a practice amp, and a drum machine playing this music. Search this one out (or send $15 bucks to the address below to get one). (AS)
(Boner/Queen Cobra, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA, 94146-0402)



R'N'R - "I've Had It/Your Rules"

Wow... two songs of thick fucking rock. Mid-tempo punk numbers that sound like slowed-down hardcore, if that makes any sense. When everything these days is played at light speed, something like this just sounds all that more powerful and driving. Chunky rock riffs and raw, hoarse vocals. It's like a hardcore record where the breakdowns last the entire song. In case I'm giving the wrong impression, I really like it. (AM)
(Cadmium Sick, PO Box 35934, Brighton, MA 02135, distortboston@hotmail.com)

RAMBO/CRUCIAL UNIT - split EP

I hope RAMBO becomes the biggest band in the world. They are perhaps most renowned for their live shows, but the music is near perfect modern hardcore. The likes of which you might hear on one of those east coast tough guy labels... if the fools could stop fixing their hair long enough to notice the best hardcore band in the land that's right under their nose. Mosh parts, guitar harmonies, and the kind of destructive riffs that make AGNOSTIC FRONT bow their heads. The brutality extends to the lyrics as well, with criticism of post 9/11 hero worship and (of course) bicycles. Awesome. But wait!! What about the other best live band in the USA, CRUCIAL UNIT? Do not worry, my little hardcore fool, the iced tea drinking fools from Pittsburgh are back moshing their way into our hearts. The UNIT gets better with every record, and these four numbers are even faster than the split with MUNICIPAL WASTE, and the lyrics are still funny as hell, this record finds our buffet loving friends moshing through Chinese restaurants and moshing against milk solids. This is the record of the month, no contest. (WN)
(Ed Walters, 2416 South Warnock Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148)

REACHING FORWARD - "Burning the Lies" LP

Dutch youth crew hardcore with breakdowns and mosh parts in all the right places. Musically I really liked this, but the vocals were a letdown. Everyone knows I am a sucker for cheesy straight edge lyrics, but the vocalist has to at least sound like he gives a damn about "the great times shared" and "the friends left behind." Obviously they weren't that great, because this guy just sounds bored. (CC)

(Reflections, Spoorwegstraat 117, 6828 AP, Arhem, NETHERLANDS)

THE REACTION - "Horror on Highway 95" CD

Sorry, I just don't understand the appeal of rockabilly, or psychobilly or whatever. I know a lot of people dig it, and I don't think they're liars. It just doesn't register with me. That said, this is actually a lot more straightforward than most of what I consider rockabilly. It's really just punk rock. The songs are pretty well put together and the lyrics talk about "spooky" things—if you know what I mean, like things that the MISFITS would sing about. The layout is nice and simple, if a little boring. It features a picture of the band looking really bad ass. Me and my friends have been trying to get down that "bad ass" look that all the bands have these days. RANCID'S got it. These guys are working towards it, they smile too much, though. It can help a band's career, you know? Anyway, I think this band just needs a little more "punch."…a little more "kick."…a little more "pizazz." You know what I mean. The songs are pretty catchy, and they look like nice dudes. If you like *Gearhead* magazine, you might like this band. For me...maybe no. (WR)
(Acme, PO Box 441, Dracut, MA 01826)

REAGAN SS - "Hail the New Dawn" EP

If you haven't heard the ferocious split the did with JOHN BROWNS ARMY, here are southern California's REAGAN SS with eight more songs of intense, fast, driving hardcore to pound you out of your LED ZEPPELIN induced pot smoking stupor. It's straight forward hardcore influenced by the CIRCLE JERKS, and all of the usual suspects. These kids pull it of without sounding like a cover band, which is becoming less and less common these days. Great lyrics and artwork that'll make your grandmother wet. This is hardcore the way it was meant to be. (VH)
(Six Two Five Thrashcore, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413, www.625thrash.com)

READY TO FIGHT - "Never Back Down" EP

I liked this. Much like the XFILESX, this band has a good sense of humor. This is all speculation since they didn't include a lyric sheet, but with song titles like "Move to Switzerland" and "Circle Mosh or Die", I think its safe to say that this band isn't taking itself too seriously. READY TO FIGHT play fast hardcore and have a really obnoxious vocalist (who really grew on me after the third spin). Solid record, but send a lyric sheet next time. (CC)
(Cadmium Sick, PO Box 35934 Brighton, MA 02135)

RETALIATOR/BAKERS DOZEN - "Kick Down the Fuckin' Wall II" split LP

Here's a split Oi! album with English RETALIATOR and Scottish BAKERS DOZEN. RETALIATOR has a really bad choppy sound and is very uninteresting lyrically. Scottish skins BAKERS DOZEN is a bit more listenable I guess but sticks in a shit load of metal guitar where it shouldn't have ever surfaced. Yikes! (SR)
(Blind Beggar, Bogenstr.25, D-66957 Eppenbrunn, GERMANY, www.oirecords.com)

RIOT 99 - "EXD - the Studio Sessions" CD

Canadian streetpunk recorded live on a radio show. Apparently most of these songs are to be rerecorded for an LP later this year which you should wait for if you are a fan as this recording is pretty mediocre. Pretty straight-ahead rough and tumble oi tinged punk, not too shabby nor something to wet my freshly creased Levis over. (TB)
(Nerve Damage, 2 Bloor St West, Suite 100, Box 477, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2, CANADA)

ROUSTABOUTS – "The Only One" CD

Solid sounding "street punk" from Oklahoma City, that seems to combine elements of the REDUCERS SF and GC5. Yet, there is something about the ROUSTABOUTS that seems to be lacking. It seems whenever I think that this CD is really going to start rocking, it just falls flat. On another topic, I slammed the label this couple months ago for putting the American Flag on their artwork, and am proud to say that it is now gone. I at least think that this is a wise decision. (JF)
(Haunted Town Records, 1658 N.Milwaukee Ave #1698, Chicago, IL 60647, info@roustabouts.net)

S.O.B. - "Symphonies of Brutality" LP

Here is yet another bootleg of various S.O.B. releases. Classic Japanese thrash that hits you like a punch to the throat. The quality of this bootleg is pretty decent. So if you do not have any S.O.B. releases in your collection, then you should start picking up some of these bootlegs and check out what all the hype is about. (RC)
(Shrapnel, 8, Rue De La Villette, F-75019 Paris, FRANCE)

SAIRAAT MIELET - "The Extended Plays" LP

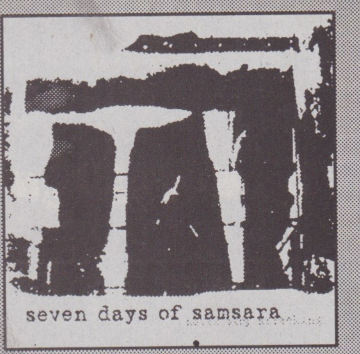
Limited to 500, this long player compiles the complete works of this rather obscure but brilliant Finnish SXE band from the early 90s—but don't let the edge scare you away, 'cause this has much more in common with the likes of your Finnish heroes like APPENDIX, TERVEET KADET, or RATTUS than it does with such jocks as YOUTH OF TODAY, TEN YARD FIGHT, or JUDGE. Like many of the classic Finnish bands they combine, hectic, urgent, yet melodic guitar work with total bleeding throat vocals and charging bull drums, making them required listening in my opinion. This record compiles both of their EPs, the demo from '92, rehearsal tracks, and out takes from studio recordings, 30 tracks in total! Totally amazing, original and powerful stuff. Get to work kids cause these won't last long! (MT)
(Passing Bells, Ritzinkuja 1 D 20, 20380 Turku, FINLAND, passingbells@hotmail.com)

SCAPEGOATS - "Life Is Pasted on My Eyes" CD

This Santa Cruz, CA band existed from 1980-1982. Based on the flyers on the sleeve, they opened for all the biggies in the South Bay. Good quality recordings of hyper punk that keeps the songs short. Think GERMS and SST influence. A good release for fans of early California hardcore. (RL)
(Grand Theft Audio, 501 W. Glenoaks Blvd, PMB 313, Glendale, CA 91202)

THE SCIENTISTS - "Blood Red River" LP

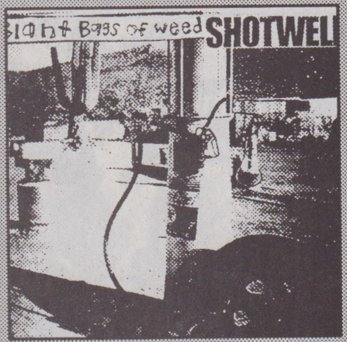
A reissue of one of this great Australian band's mini LPs. It includes all six songs from the original plus nine extras recorded within the following two years, "Swampland", "Atom Bomb Baby", "We Had Love",



"Demolition Derby", etc. This is the slower, dronier, bluesy stuff, but it is still so rocking I could listen to these for hours. And I usually do too. Pressed on very thick vinyl and includes a poster of the cover backed with Kim Salmon recollections of the bands history. Great reading while listening to a great band. (CK)
(Munster, www.munster-records.com)

SCIENTISTS - "We Had Love/Clear Spot"
Two reissued classic songs by these old Australian chaps. the SCIENTISTS have a distinct driving rhythmic sound powered by a repetitive distorted bass guitar. The most semi-modern day comparison I can muster up is the JESUS LIZARD. David Yow bit hard on the SCIENTISTS' sound. But hey, why not? They're are a great band. As far as this purchasing this 45, rather than pay import record prices, I'd search out the recent SCIENTISTS CD re-release. Both of the songs on this record are on it. dig.(AS)
(Munster, www.munster-records.com)

SCIENTISTS - "Human Jukebox 1984-1986" LP
I've got to admit to being fonder of "Frantic Romantic" era SCIENTISTS, but this material certainly beats the "Weird Love" LP. Generally mid-tempo to slow, kinda swamp rocky with some LUX INTERIOR-esque vocal inflections. The title track, an art-damaged stomper, is the highlight. (DD)
(Munster, www.munster-records.com)



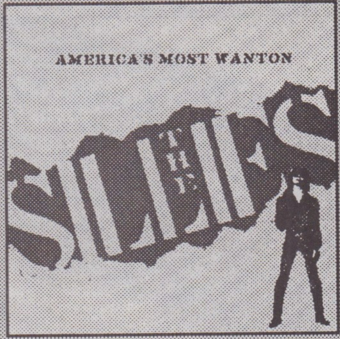
SCUTTLE/SECOND RATE - split CD
The English SCUTTLE sound very much like their American emo/melodic hardcore compatriots. Nothing really astounding here but pretty sound nonetheless. SECOND RATE, from France, are a lot better: more volume, more guitars, more balls in general. They play this kind of music well, still, it's a little too nice and clean . Too FARSIDE! Too MINERAL! (AD)
(Firefly, PO Box 30179, London E17 5FE, UK)

SEED - "(If I Catch a) Baby Rainbow EP
Don't be fooled by the hippy dippy cover and first track, which is dire indie rock drivel. The other three tracks have way more thump and swagger, moving into primitive fuzzed out garage rock territory with mucho catchy hooks and punk swagger. What makes this record really interesting to me is where it's from: Cornwall is the poorest and most remote county in England and has had almost zero punk rock output (I should know, I grew up in the next town from these folks). It's always inspiring and exciting to see punk rock emerge from places where it's still hard to be outside the mainstream. Keep it up!! (TB)
(Rabbit In The Rain, 5 Fords Row, Redruth, Cornwall, TR15 1 JS, UK)

SEETHINGS/UNFOLD - split CD
UNFOLD are definitely the better band here. Slow COALESCE style metal/hardcore. Throat melting vocals and hammering riffs take charge on their two blistering tunes. SEETHINGS plays some of that nu-metal bullshit that you here on corporate "metal" radio stations and MTV. And you know how much that sucks. (RC)
(Division, PO Box 208, 1400 Yuerdon 3, SWITZERLAND, www.divisionrecords.com)

SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA - "Never Stop Attacking" CD
Metal butting heads with emo... Painful? Tragic? Disturbing? Played-out? UNCONSTITUTIONAL? SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA have proven, with their intense live shows and several solid records, it's not as ugly as it sounds... This eleven song CD contains their "We Are Already Dead" 7" along with a bunch of tracks from split EP's. (VH)
(Harmless, 1218 W. Hood Apt 2, Chicago, IL 60660)

SHOTWELL/GIANT BAGS OF WEED split EP
SHOTWELL'S at it again. Jimmy's passionate vocals and melodic guitar are backed up with an all star rhythm section. SHOTWELL offer some of their more tender tunes with a ballad and a rocker. GIANT BAGS OF WEED sound an awful lot like SHOTWELL and often remind me of CRIMPSHRINE. A fine EP. (HM)
($2ppd: Half-Day, PO Box 3381, Bloomington, IN 47402, halfdayrecords@yahoo.com)



SHUT THE FUCK UP - "Miserable Existence" EP
This band delivers angry crusty sounds at high speed. Good ear piercing screaming male vocals and tons of grinding guitar. Not bad. (SR)
(Third World, no address)

SIDA/DESTRUCCIÏN - split EP
Fuck yes! Raw fucking D-beat punk attack fills both sides of this Spanish single. Take the likes of the first DISCHARGE EP, the first MG-15 EP and well do you really need anything else? Both bands pound away in the raw style that sets my wee heart a pounding with joy! Sadly it appears the SIDA are no longer with us, but DESTRUCCIÏN continue on—so with any luck you can still see them play their hit "Te Amo D-beat (I love you D-beat!)" There's so much good shit coming out of Spain these days so don't miss the fucking boat, ok? (MT)
(Don't Belong, Apdo. 8035, 33280 Gijon, SPAIN, www.don't-belong.com)

SICARII - LP
Seven songs of sheer bombastic insanity. This LP conjures up images of Japan's SHIKABANE, or think of a really crusty GUYANA PUNCHLINE. In your face from start to finish, even during the more quiet parts, with a super rough recording and apocalyptic lyrics that blend in well with music that would be appropriate as the soundtrack for the end of the world. Always just about to fall to pieces, and then recovering into the kind of heaviness that makes the listener raise his or her fist in a claw of unholy power (yeah, I know how dumb that sounds, but imagine how dumb I look as I'm doing exactly that midway through the second side). I'm sorry that I missed this band when they passed through the Bay Area, as I imagine that their intensity translates very well live. Silk screened cover to boot! (WN)
(sicarii@graffiti.com)

THE SICK LIPSTICK - EP

It is pretty fitting that this band's label mates include the BLOOD BROTHERS, The RED LIGHT STING, and PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES, because The SICK LIPSTICK sounds like the love child of this *menage-a-trois.* In fact, they do seem juvenile in a cutesy way, lots of melodic guitar and keyboard with girlie, yet plain, vocals. The supped up production effects make all of the instruments mush together, forming a liquidy goop that drips from the hair of all those greasy indie rockers. I hope these kids have fun at their practices, I can imagine them rocking out in the darkness of an echoey cave, with snappy dance moves. Or maybe they're the type of band that brings their own red lights to their shows. I dunno. But as for me—*blahhh.* (MM)
(Sound Virus, PO Box 55783 Valencia, CA 91385)

SILLIES - "America's Most Wanton" CD

First and foremost, I gotta commend whoever put this CD/multimedia experience together—it's the kind of reissue that I'd like to see more of, a document that actually gives you a up-close-and-personal glimpse of a band (assuming you want one). The SILLIES were late 70s/early 80s jokey-schlocky-fun-new wave outfit that at their zenith remind me of the GIZMOS (especially with their goofy junior-high sense of humor) and are well loved in certain record-collecting circles. For your dough you get a live vid of a recent reunion show, a gallery of pics of the band in their various incarnations, history of the group, and twelve tracks of punchy and raunchy rock 'n' roll that runs the gamut from angry '77 noise ("Break Loose") to wistful reflection ("If Your Girlfriend Still Loves You When Your Car Breaks Down"). Get digging. (JH)
(Scooch Pooch, 5850 W. 3rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90036, www.scoochpooch.com)

SKARP/HUMAN ERROR - split EP

I said goddam!!! HUMAN ERROR? Their side of the 7" is pretty exciting, especially if you is into bands like SCHLONG and STIKKY as well as the first VICTIMS FAMILY LP. Mathematical and chaotic. Can you dig it?! And SKARP? SKARP are so fucking good, and such great people and so dedicated to the fuckin' punx and stuff. If that ain't enough to convince ya, the music is gnarly, irritated, punk-metal-punk and the vox are that new kinda deep, scratchy semi-epic woman sound. It's real good.(JA)
(Aborted Society, PMB 1377, 1122 East Pike St., Seattle, WA 98122-3934 or Pull The Trigger, 1601 S. Main St. Unit #1, Seattle, WA 98144)

SNITCH - "Hoist the Sails" EP

Young band from Switzerland, sounds a lot like RHYTHM COLLISION. Energetic speedy tuneful punk, maybe a little too rough for the Warped Tour crowd. Good, could be really good. (AD)
(Sprinter, Stan Karsai, Neuweisenstr.27, 8610 Uster, SWITZERLAND)

SNOTTY - "Short Quick Love" LP

The only word I can think of to describe this band is "manic." No drum beat occurs in more than one song, which for some reason is a rare achievement in melodic punk, and they squeeze ten songs into thirteen minutes, which makes for a nice, quick listen without any extraneous bullshit. All of this occurs under some rad screamed vocals. Each one of these songs is totally unique and has enough energy to... I don't know, do something that requires a lot of energy. Also, the LP is one sided with an etching of the cover art on the other side of the record. Badass. (MX)
(Hermit, PO Box 309, Leeds, LS2 7AH UK, www.hermitrecords.co.uk)

SONICS - "Fire & Ice" LP

You've heard the hits, or at least I think you have—"Strychnine," "Boss Hoss," & "The Witch"—all the biggies that make for such perfect poolside listening. Munster, in their almost-infinite wisdom, have chosen to release an LPs worth of lesser material by the band. Not necessarily lacking in terms of quality or presentation, just the band displaying their softer, more sensitive sides rather than out-and-out raucous. Side one kicks off with two versions of "Which Way the Wind Blows," both guaranteed to alienate the low-brow cruise-control set and most casual listeners "Lost Love," "Good Hard Rock," and "Once Again" make good on the SONICS promise, but the balance of this LP would be most readily enjoyed by fanatics. You've heard the best, now try the rest. (JH)
(Munster, PO Box 18107, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN, www.munster-records.com)

SOOTHE - "Soothe" EP

SOOTHE, who are from Japan, crank through six songs of sloppy fast punk with squealing guitars and harshly screamed female vocals. There was even a few moments of some mellow melody to be found. Unfortunately, in the end I didn't think the music was very powerful and the release ended up being a letdown. (RC)
(Chiyo Taguchi, 2-1 Kamimutsunachio, Mishima, Okazaki 444-0859 Aichi, JAPAN)

SORAMAME - "Soramame" EP

SORAMME, who I believe are from Spain, hammer through some fast, in-your-face hardcore thrash. It charges pretty hard, jumping up a notch into some blast beats occasionally. The screamed vocals also sound pretty fierce. Unfortunately, there was no insert at all. So no lyrics, band location, or photos were available. Plus one side is 33 rpm and the other one is 45 rpm...pretty tricky guys. This one definitely perked my interest. (RC)
(Ozone Kids, PO Box 627, Manresa, 08240, BCN SPAIN)

THE SORE THUMBS - "Three Courd Hop" CD

Hmm...a Bay Area band that I have never heard of. The music is very melodic and maybe sounds like SWINGIN' UTTERS with less attitude. The CD gets boring after a little while. The lyrics are not bad. There is nothing particularly bad about this album, it just doesn't grab me in any way.The layout has a bad use of color and way too much pixelation. Ah well.
(no address)

THE SPRINGFIELDS - "Johnny's Dead" CD

The SPRINGFIELDS sound like an unhealthy mix of BAD RELIGION and *Boogada Boogada Boogada*-era SCREECHING WEASEL and they feature lyrics that are supposed to make me feel sorry for a

football player or some shit and a song called "I Wanna Fuck Britney Spears." This band sucks so much butt. This is the kind of CD I save so that I can make fun of it with my friends when we have listened to the same QUEER WULF record over and over again (see also: JOHNNY COCK & THE NUTS). This is so so so fucking bad. So bad, man. You won't even believe it. I will personally hunt this band down and make them eat GoGurt before they are allowed to release another album. My god, this album is foul. (WR)
(Morphius, PO Box 13474, Baltimore, MD 21203)

STATE - "No Illusions" EP

Here's a bootleg of one of the best punk bands from Michigan. This is the STATE's debut EP, circa 1983,when they were at the height of their powers. The song "No Illusions" goes like this: "This is no god/There is no fate/There is no love/There's only waste/There is no order/There is no state/ There's only chaos/ There's only hate/ Life ain't shit, just senseless toil." Now those are punk rock lyrics! This band just rips you a new asshole! Get this bootleg—or the original if you can afford it!! (BR)
(Reagan Era HC)

STARING BACK - "On" CD

A mix of good Epitaph pop punk and PROPAGANDHI. Another "you've heard it before but they do it so well" release. Tight, catchy, and riff heavy, this release is all right in my book. (RL)
(Lobster, PO Box 1473, Santa Barbara, CA 93102, www.staringback.com)

THE STITCHES - "You Better Shut Up and Listen" LP

The STITCHES have a mercurial live show that more often than not is totally unhinged and positively exhilarating. Unfortunately, the live show preserved for all eternity on this picture disc is not one of the STITCHES special moments. The mediocre sound could be tolerated- after all this is live from the Mesa Club in Costa Mesa, California, where the fights start early and Ed usually gets arrested—but this show was certainly lackluster. The STITCHES seem to be playing everything slightly slower than normal—very unusual for these fucks (who normally speed up songs live). This is for STITCHES completists only. (BR)
(What Else?, PO Box 1211, Columbus, IN 47202, www.whatelserecords.com)

SUBB- "Daylight Saving" CD

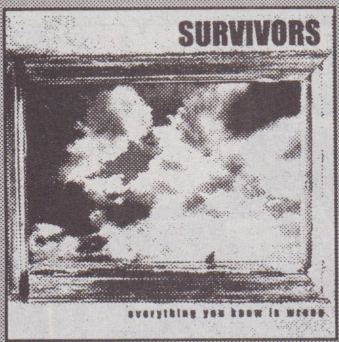
There's really nothing wrong with sounding really produced and ready for the radio, but there's nothing really great about it either. Would you find this in the record collection of a starry-eyed twelve-year-old girl, next to BLINK 182? Maybe, or on your local yet nationally run evil corporate radio station. (MM)
(Stomp, 78 Rachel E., Montreal Quebec, CANADA H2W 1C6)

SUBMACHINE - "Live Fast... Die Dumb!" LP

The double buzz guitar attack and masterful production sound excellent on this release. Overall a more professional package than their last LP (seven years ago!), but with the same spirit and energy. (HM)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave, Cotati, CA 94931)

SURVIVORS - "Everything You Know Is Wrong" EP

SURVIVORS sound like every other band that tries to mix screamo with that suppose of style of late 80s hardcore. Problem is, besides being done one too many times in the last few years, the late 80s hardcore sound sucked. To hear another band do a shitty version of that sound just makes it worse. Hmm, if SURVIVORS follow the familiar pattern of all the bands that came before them, they will, in a few years, be writing beautifully crafted emo-pop songs that the college kids will love. (JF)
(Knife Or Death, 805 Able St., Northfield, NJ 08225, www.thesurvivors.net)



TVH - "Night Raid on Lisbon Street" CD

A release that appeared mysteriously and without warning from the most unlikely of places (San Francisco, the City that Summer Forgot). Backstory first: the premiere punk rock band in SF during the City's 1976-'77 original wave were CRIME—an oft-misunderstood combo that tossed out a couple of classic singles ("Hotwire My Heart/Baby You're So Repulsive" and "Frustration/Murder by Guitar" among them) and made a sharp, stylistic mark that's yet to be effaced by 20 years of skinhead jocks in tennis shoes. Jump cut to 2002: CRIME guitarist Johnny Strike forms new band, records and releases CD. People hear it. *Night Raid on Lisbon Street* differs from CRIME's recorded output in that the sounds are a little cleaner, more angular, and jagged around the edges. Tunes like "Wigger," "Black Light," "Yo! Slim Fats," and "Tibetan Head" have their own insidious appeal—CRIME turned sideways, or skewed at a 45-degree angle. The voice hasn't changed a bit. A live show wound be the perfect chaser. (JH)
(Flapping Jet, 3639 Midway Dr. #271, San Diego, CA 92110, www.flappingjet.com)

TEENAGE IDOLS - CD

Teenage? No way. Idols? Maybe to their underage cousins. The TEENAGE IDOLS are 4/4-beat Scandi rock block working a brand of thumping, tribal fuzztone groove that sometimes wins and occasionally stalls. Dig the sneering guitar, the jungle beats, the languid and drugged-out loping pace. Don't dig the voice mixed way up and beyond the call of duty, chanting words about how he wants/needs his baby's tender ministrations. Less the NOMADS than *Flamejob*-era CRAMPS. (JH)
(Playground, www.playgroundmusic.com)

THIS MACHINE KILLS/JR EWING - split LP

This is the same record that was released on 7" and CD but has also found its way to a one sided 12". TMK plays one hardcore song that sounds pretty much that same as their stuff from the LP. It is hardcore and emo in a 1990s sort of way. Their second song is an electronic number with distorted vocals. The lyrics are heavily political but it's too bad that bands like this just keep playing shows to the same kids. These bands should be playing shitty bars, trying to convince people that don't already share their ideas. They shouldn't get so uptight when they get a chance to play a party with meatheads because getting through to just one person who doesn't share your political and social beliefs is much better than spending five years playing to kids that already worship you. JR EWING has made a turn toward the rock 'n' roll side of punk. They still play good emo hardcore but there is something in these two new songs that reminds me of the INTERNATIONAL NOISE

CONSPIRACY. It's still screamy and driving and is actually much more catchy than their earlier stuff. (PA)
(Dim Mak, PO Box 14041, Santa Barbara, CA 93107, www.dimmak.com)

TOTAL SHUTDOWN - "Broadcast Performances" EP

Hmmm... This is a difficult review. I guess this band is part of the whole "arty" hardcore (well...) scene that seems to fester in shitty Oakland bars and be incredibly popular among art students. Hectic drumming, loud guitars, a bunch of thrown together saxophone clickity-clak noise parts, distorted vocals, etc. etc... I guess its decent for what it is, but not really my cup of tea. (SP)
(Life is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620, www.lifeisabuse.com)

TOY DOLLS - "Ten Years of Toys" CD

A re-issue of what was the first "Best of" for the TOY DOLLS back in 1989. With many hits including "My Girlfriend's Dad's a Vicar" and "Dig That Groove Baby," as well as bonus version of "I've Got Asthma," you can't go wrong here. Personally I still get every TOY DOLLS LP and see them every time they pass through since they still have that Olga led spunk after all these years. (RL)
(Captain Oi, www.captainoi.com)

TOY DOLLS - "Bare Faced Cheek" CD

A re-issue of the TOY DOLLS' fourth LP. This LP featured "Yul Brynner Was a Skinhead" and "Fisticuffs In Frederick Street." Pretty much every TOY DOLLS LP is a good thing, so it's great to see Captain Oi getting these out there again. So if you missed these the first time around here's a second chance. (RL)
(Captain Oi, www.captainoi.com)

TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR- CD

Don't get pissed cause your girlfriend broke your heart, or your car, or your face. There's more to it, like feeling cheated by society, and stuff. Do something about it. And when you do throw that brick, listen to TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR, cause they seem to pull off the emo-hardcore thing very well. (MM)
(Alone, PO Box 3019 Oswego NY 13126)

TRASHBRATS - "American Disaster: Special Edition" EP

This band is so mediocre it's not funny. I have been listening to this for over twenty minutes and still can't bring my self to even hate it enough to turn it off. It's all filler and no meat. It's like a sandwich filled with just mayo and mustard. Some people may eat that and enjoy this record but not me. Gimmie some meat and some rockin' tunes. This is poppy bar rock. A little 70's glam, a little snot punk, a little power pop... but not enough soul. (BM)
(Alien Snatch, Morikeweg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.de, info@aliensnatch.de)

TREEBERRYS - "Talkin' About Treeberrys" LP

.....hmmmmmm, so far I don't know about this one....!!! These guys listen to a lot of BEATLES, that's for sure.....but not as much as the RASPBERRIES did....!!!!! This Japanese power-trio needs to put a little Brian Wilson into their diet to get that full Eric Carmen king size penis going......!!!! C'mon guys, you can do it.....keep pumping, you're almost there.....!!!! And while you're at it you might as well get Wally Bryson's hard too.....trust me, you'll need it....!!!! I just finished listening to both sides of this LP and I can't tell if it was sung in English or Japanese.....or both....!!! You decide.... (SW)
(Sounds Of Subterrania!, PO Box 103662 34036 Kassel, GERMANY, www.soundsofsubterrania.com)

TSUNAMI BOMB - "The Ultimate Escape" CD

Melodic poppy hardcore/punk from Northern California, not be confused with TSUNAMI from years back. Very much in the Fat/Epitaph camp, though what sets this apart is the female vocals, which are a refreshing change from the boys club that genre has become. Not as punk as TILT, this is reminiscent of a speedy MUFFS or the Spanish band WALLRIDE. All said and done, this is a lot better than fucking NO DOUBT. (AD)
(Kung Fu)

TWELVE HOUR TURN - "Perfect Progress, Perfect Destruction" LP

You can't imagine how happy the release of a new THT record makes me. You may recognize the vocals from the TRUE NORTH record, but THT has been around much longer. They fit the generic definition of emo but it is done so much better than most of the bands out there. The guitars have a somewhat twangy sound to them but they are still distorted and heavy. The bass lines are catchy and the drumming is solid in a way that is not straightforward. If you are familiar with the band, this record is not as powerful as the first LP but it follows along the same lines as their recent 10". This stuff grows on you to. (PA)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

TWO WEEK NOTICE - "Turn Me On" CD

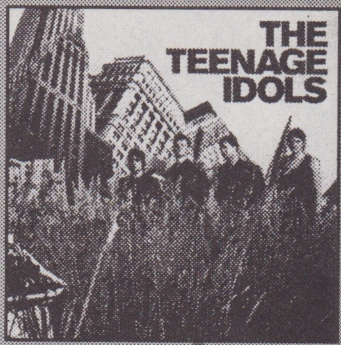
The first two songs on this four-songer are great punky pop songs with gal vocals in the POPGUNS meets DISCOUNT vein. The second two songs are more pop. I'll also mention upon further investigation, there is a spiritual thing going on here. Which isn't necessarily the kiss of death for me but I know how you punk rockers are. I will say that if I heard one of the first two songs on college radio I would track this down in a hurry (if I didn't already have it of course). (RL)
(www.twoweeknotice.net)

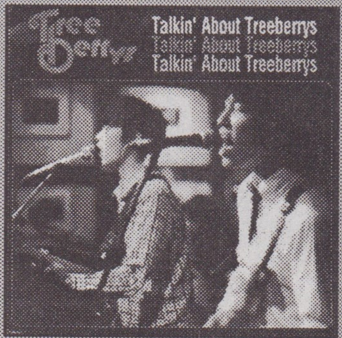
UMIN - "Revolt" CD

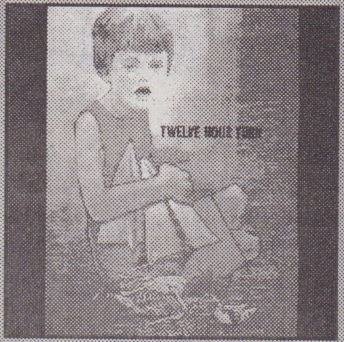
Harsh hate/grindcore that alternates between fast and mid tempos. There are two vocalists. One has a shrill scream and the other one has a deep rumbling growl. Pretty simple and predictable. And as the say on the insert... "Thanks to everybody on the planet for nothing...bitches." (RC)
(Umin Hate Ya)

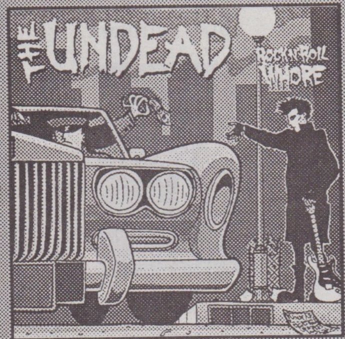
THE UNDEAD - "Rock 'n' Roll Whore" EP

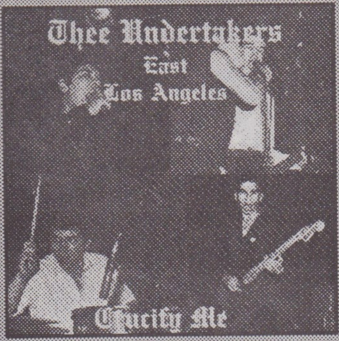
I was never a big fan of the UNDEAD. Truth be told, I wasn't ever even much of a MISFITS fan, but I

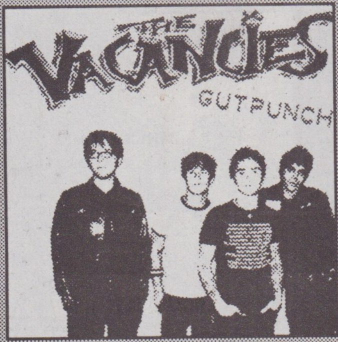












did enjoy their stuff to a certain degree. I think I didn't like all the hoopla that surrounded the MISFITS. They had a following that made them seem like the punk version of the GRATEFUL DEAD. And when Bobby and Glen went their separate ways, it was almost like the BEATLES splitting up; the sum was greater than the individual parts. I hope that makes sense. Anyway, what you've got here are four songs that were recorded in 2000 and at least some of which were originally released (and recorded) long before that. It all seems a little watered down, though "Rock 'n' Roll Whore" is pretty amusing. (KK)
(Munster, PO Box 18107, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN)

THE UNHEARD OF - "Revoxination" LP
Rather twee (as in non-limeys using Anglicisms) fuzz guitar/organ with revival stuff with way too much pop psych for my taste on most of the tunes (best and worst exceptions: "If You Don't Believe Me, Don't" which is a decent quasiANIMALS ballad and "A Taste of the Same" which doesn't quite work without the sneering voice of what's his pickle from the BAD SEEDS [he had that solo LP, as I'm sure you remember]. Featuring a guy from PLASTICLAND, so he gets points for sticking to his guns at any rate.(DD)
(Psych Out Records, Piazza 1, Maggio, 44 - 72017 Ostuni (BR), ITALY)

THEE UNDERTAKERS - "Crucify Me" CD
Another long-buried obscurity is exhumed for public inquest (sorry, I couldn't resist the easy hook). I've heard of the UNDERTAKERS once or twice—referenced as an opening band at some long-ago Los Angeles hardcore gig—but knew no more than the name and place. Shame on me: Crucify Me is a unearthed testament of an authentically OG combo as good as or better than many of their spike-headed peer group. Theirs is the classic tale of a underage band from the Other Side of the Tracks (East LA, here) driven toward breakup by external pressures and public indifference. Culled from 1980 demos and an unreleased 1981 LP, Crucify Me is a classy and classic example of adolescent Reagan-era juvenile delinquency, as well an unwritten page in the annals of East LA *historia de la musiqa* punk. "America's Dream," "National Hero" and "Street Patrol" are minor classics of early LA shave-headed hardcore—post GERMS, pre-straightedge thrash. Comparisons to early SoCal scenesters the ADOLESCENTS, GEARS, East LA's STAINS, and CHEIFS (*sic*) are easy and obvious, but it's gotta be said that these kids were playing on the same jungle gym and ought to have been just as infamous. Listen hard, learn fast, and dance the Swivel to "Drug City." (JH)
(Grand Theft Audio, 501 W. Glenoaks Blvd, PMB 313, Glendale, CA 92102)

THE VACANCIES- "Gutpunch" CD
Verging on the edge of hardcore and cock-rock, the VACANCIES make me think of college kids getting drunk, putting on their leather jackets and act really tough. The VACANCIES seem to think they're really tough, but I think they'd loose in a fistfight to the DAMMED any day. (MM)
(Smog Veil, 316 California Ave. #207 Reno, NV 89509)

VEAL - "I Hate Your Lipstick/Defiler"
ATTENTION BANDS AND LABELS! REMEMBER TO SEND PRESS RELEASES WITH YOUR RELEASES! It makes writing reviews ever so much easier! Case in point: "Veal joins an elite corps in the tradition of revolutionary rock trios, using twisted lyrical imagery that culls up the likes of Tom Waits, Lou Reed, or Elvis Costello, but rocks out like a Cramps/Dick Dale/Iggy Pop orgy (Egads, what a ghastly image! I fear I'll have erectile dysfunction for a few weeks.)" Revolutionary rock trios indeed, so revolutionary that none of the namechecked bothered to consist of three members. I doubt that "cull" was quite the word for which the author[ess?] was looking, come to think of it. Damn you, spellchecker! Humor and hyperbole (*My* press release: "This is the funniest review in the history of this rag, causing merriment like a Robert Benchley/Shane White/Motorbooty orgy.") aside, the a side is a catchy punkabilly flavored rawker. The flip, an instro that tries to get a little too clever for rawk, is less successful. I'll bet I don't even get any thanks from the band for giving their release the longest record review in this issue. (DD)
(Six Shooter, www.vealmusic.com)

VERBAL ABUSE - "Just an American Band" CD
Hats off to Mike from Beer City for doing a legit re-release of this amazing record. VERBAL ABUSE who were originally from Texas, and eventually moved out to San Francisco, released this record way back in 1983. They have gone through many style and line-up changes as a band, but this is the record that started it all. Every one of these songs is a whirlwind of mind-blowing punk rock, created by four angry kids who were lashing out at the walls closing in on their outcast lives. The music is stripped down, fast and furious and to the point. They don't let any bullshit stand in the way of their mission to destroy your ears. On the last half of the CD there is a pretty rocking recording of a live show from 1984. Do yourself a favor and get this release immediately! (RC)
(Beer City, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035, www.beercity.com)

WALKING BLADE - "On the Streets!" CD
Fairly generic streetpunk from Spain, like a sped up 4 SKINS. (AD)
(Action!, Apdo.19167, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN)

WEAVING THE DEATHBAG - "Weaving the Deathbag" EP
Killer fucking Midwestern hardcore punk from these ex-USV, DEFACTO OPPRESSION and ASININE SOLUTION folx. Melodic yet speedy hardcore, which at times brings to mind Tulsa's favorite sons, NOTA. Well constructed and thought out lyrics round out this rather excellent, and soon to be Midwestern classic. No rehash here, just solid hardcore fucking punk. (MT)
(Hungry Ghosts, PO Box 620241, Middleton WI 53562)

WICKED - CD
How come I get all the Swiss stuff? The first line of this I thought it sounded like the guy from COCK SPARRER, and this does sound like COCK SPARRER, later COCK SPARRER... In fact, the best way I can explain this is, remember when all those old bands did records past their sell-by date (*Guilty as Charged*, *The Power and the Glory, Airborne, Prison Bound*) (name the bands and win a prize) and you still really liked some of the songs? Well this whole album is like that. Once you get past their awful name, WICKED play some great

solid catchy punk rock. Actually, this fucking kicks ass. For some reason it also reminds me of the SMOKING POPES, but in a good way. (AD)
(Sprinter, Stan Karsai, Neuwiesenstr. 27, Ch - 8610 Uster, SWITZERLAND)

WITCH HUNT - "Fed Up" EP
The first release from the New Jersey trio, combining elements of Crass Records style anarcho punk with early 90s ABC NO RIO bands. Typically a fan of the fast, I absolutely love WITCH HUNT when they slow down a bit, as their songwriting and female/male/female-vocals make for the kind of power that gives me goosebumps. The songs centering primarily on women's issues, and more specifically those of women in the Middle East, many of whom live under unspeakable conditions. Their show at Gilman was spectacular, and "On My Honor" is my song of the month. (WN)
(Get The Axe, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126)

THE WORST - "Expect the Worst" EP
Looks like we got a bootleg here of the WORST's 12" EP that came out back in 1983. The WORST blast through nine tracks of top notch punk rock. It says "Reagan Era Hardcore" on the back, and I don't think that there could be a truer description of this music. Hard charging punk rock with fist pumping speed and just the right amount of aggression and attitude. Though this band is basically unknown, it is easy to see how countless bands like this laid the groundwork for many, many bands to follow. (RC)
(no address)

XFILESX/SELF DEFENSE - split EP
I thought both these bands ripped on their own, so I was pleased when I found out they were teaming up to do a split. SELF DEFENSE pick up where they left off, and play an angry '82 era style of hardcore with intelligent lyrics about marriage, graffiti, and growing up. XFILESX play a faster, more thrashy style of hardcore with higher pitched vocals. Their lyrics are definitely more tongue in cheek, as I don't think I've ever come across a band with a song that directly threatens to kill the person who gives their record a bad review. Well, I am not afraid to say that not only were PORTRAITS OF PAST better than the XFILESX, but they were a better looking band too. Bring it on New Bedford Mosh Crew! (CC)
(Room 101, PO BOx 1004 Windsor, CT 06095)

XPOZEZ - "Democacy" EP
An old band from the North of England, some of whom later became the INSTIGATORS, released by an old tape (yes, once upon a time there was a fierce worldwide tape trading orgy going on, and thanks to people like Chris BCT (Borderless Countries Tapes) no matter where you lived in the world you could hear bands from Brazil or Finland or fucking Huddersfield...) label on vinyl, about 18 years later. I used to have a XPOZEZ demo tape and I really liked it, it's weird to hear these songs again almost two decades later. The tracks are "Democracy," "Nightclub," "Strategy," "Skitzophrenia," & "My Generation." Somebody should release a complete XPOZEZ thing CD. (AD)
(BCT, P.O. Box 16205, San Diego. CA 92176)

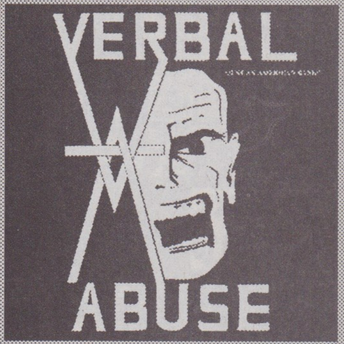
YDI - "A Place in the Sun" EP
The reissue of YDI's debut EP has stood the test of time, though its style was in some ways slightly atypical for the early 80s. On the best tracks (like the pummeling "Categorized"), burly vocals are accompanied by wall-of-noise HC; on others, high-register guitar figures scream in the background, giving the music an abrasive drill-press sound. In either case, it's compelling stuff with great garage-style production. (SS)
(Reagan Era HC)

V/A - "1157 Wheeler Avenue: a Memorial for Amadou Diallo" CD
Here is a very nicely put together compilation for a worthy cause. It is very rare that I find a compilation that I am satisfied with, but I like of this one. Eleven out of fourteen tracks on the comp are unreleased, live or rare. J CHURCH plays a songs where they mention San Francisco (my favorite quality of J CHURCH songs), there's a live recording of one of my favorite STRIKE ANYWHERE songs, a live recording of one of the better LAWRENCE ARMS songs, ANTI-FLAG covering MISSION OF BURMA, a rare or unreleased COMMON RIDER song, songs from the GC5, YOUTH BRIGADE, PLAN A PROJECT, and an embarrassing FIFTEEN song, among others. Three bucks from each comp sale goes to Human Rights Watch, which is obviously a cool thing. The comp is nice looking with a painting on the cover, a page for each band, information about Amadou Diallo, and information about Human Rights Watch. This is a damn good comp. (WR)
(Failed Experiment, 5420 S. Bishop St., Chicago, IL 60609 www.failedexperimentrecords.com)

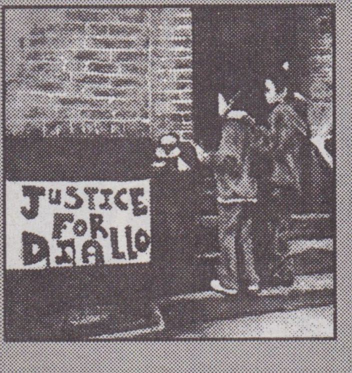
V/A - "Brewed in Sweden Vol. 2" CD
Second part of the comp I reviewed a couple of years ago. It's an oi/streetpunk collection from Sweden, so you know that you're gonna get some stuff that's surprisingly awesome, and some stuff that's just woeful. AGENT BULLDOG (nice organ) and DIMS REBELLION are back from the first one, stand out bands on this one are DA SKYWALKERS, DOWN AND AWAY, TOPPER (named after Mr. Headon I'm sure), RADIO 69, and BATTLESCARRED, though there's actually no one really bad, except maybe the LOITERS. Special mention goes to SMALLTOWN (who I wouldn't necessarily think of as a streetpunk band) who I can't hear enough of. Great band. Cool comp. (AD)
(Blind Beggar, Bogenstr. 25, D-66957 Eppenbrum, GERMANY)

V/A - "Drunk Fools Versus True Till Death" CD
Four bands from South America battle it out on this CD. This CD includes I SHOT CYRUS (blasting fast hardcore, with a touch of metal), MERDA (more blast beat hardcore, with less metal), JAZZUS (wild grind that reminds me of DISCORDANCE AXIS), and EVIL IDOLS (garage punk with buzzsaw guitars and catchy riffs). A pretty killer listen no matter how you slice it. (RC)
(no address)

V/A - "Majestic Dog Compilation Vol. 1" EP
This 7" compilation features three bands from Virginia (PCP ROADBLOCK, HORTUS, and KOJACK)



and FLESHIES from Oakland, California. I can't say that I cared too much for the three Richmond bands. PCP ROADBLOCK plays kind of funky punk rock with odd time signatures. KOJACK is heavier in a cool way. HORTUS plays screamier stuff with a lot of synth. I appreciate that they are doing music which sounds different from anything I have heard (in an unpretentious way...which is key), and each band had good moments, but I wished they had just clicked a little more with me. FLESHIES, on the other hand, rerecorded one of my favorite of their older songs "Luchador" (which was previously on what is now called their demo CD), and that song alone makes this compilation worthwhile. It is one of FLESHIES catchiest songs. The comp has an awesome cover which fits well with the music (reminds me of an old Ralph Records 7" comp cover), and although the back cover has a little more pixelation than I usually like to see, this comp is worthwhile. Go! (WR)
(Wet Tail, PO Box 1955, Richmond, Virginia 23218)



V/A - "Mie City Hardcore Vol. 2" EP
More brilliant Ÿber-distorted madness from Japan that would make the likes of GAI, CONFUSE, and GUDON proud. Side A of this fucker contains three tracks of DISCLOSE style distort from my new faves CONTRAST ATTITUDE—total wall of audio destruction guitar attack from these folx! Side B kicks off with two tracks from obvious ANTI-CIMEX worshipers ALIVE, then rounds itself out with two blasts from those overdriven noise addicts DECEIVING SOCIETYÉ all in all a fucking brilliant comp! Fans of those American distort heroes ATROCIOUS MADNESS should take note,noise not music! (MT)
(MCR, 157 Kamiagu, Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN)

V/A - "New York Thrash" LP
Right fucking on! I have listened to this compilation more times than I care to remember over the years, and it is still as energizing and fresh as the first time I heard it. On this vinyl reissue of this old school release you get the cream of the crop of New York punk and thrash. I don't remember the exact year this came out, but all the music on here is from 1978-1982. Starting with THE MAD and working your way through to the BEASTIE BOYS on the first side, it is a treat to hear a bunch of killer tracks by such great bands as BAD BRAINS, ADRENALIN O.D. and HEARTATTACK. There are a total of eleven bands on here and two "bonus" live tracks by the STIMULATORS. A must have release! (RC)
(ROIR, PO Box 501, Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012, www.roir-usa.com)

V/A - "Now That's Not What I Call Music" CD
This CD bills itself as a "skate rock compilation." Now, I'm not really an avid skateboarder. I do it every now and again, and suck quite a bit, but I know enough to know that this record would be no fun at all to skate to. It's mostly just boring garage rock, with the occasional rap-metal or weird spoken word band thrown in for good (well, not exactly good) measure. Kudos to BINGE who swoop in to save this comp by sounding like a more punk MILEMARKER. Look them up, but don't bother with this CD. (MX)
(Naked Jain, PO Box 4132, Palm Springs, CA 92263)

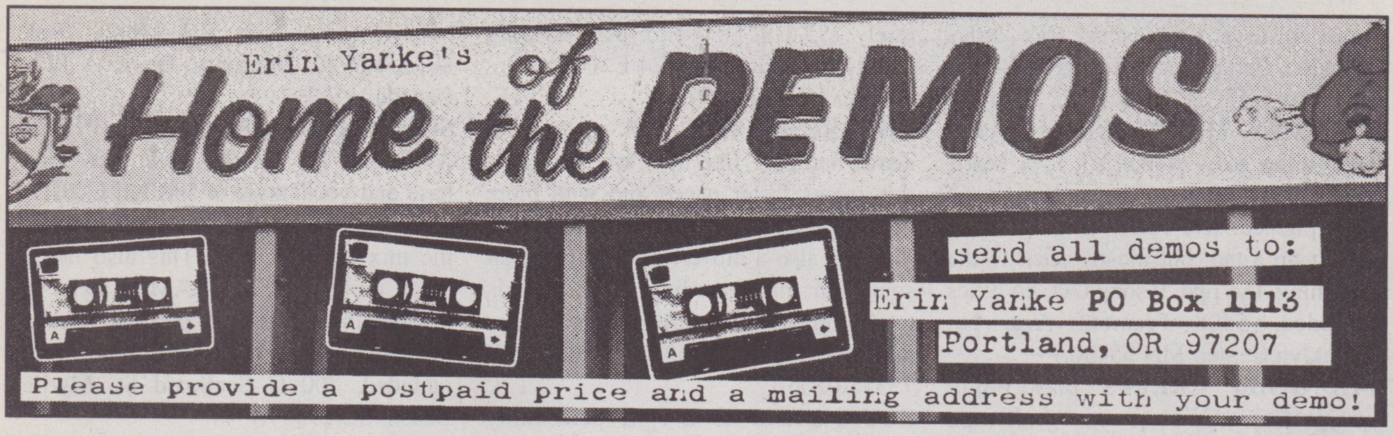
V/A - "Oi! Strike Sampler" - CD
Here's a collection of the sold out 7"'s from Oi! Strike Records. Notable sounds from DUAP, TEMPLARS, BILLIBOY & LA SUA BANDA, and RAZZAPARTE. An OK comp if you're interested in hearing shitty recordings of Oi! bands from around the globe. (SR)
(Oi! Strike, via Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69, 00146, Roma, ITALY, www.saorecords.it)

V/A - "Pride Respect Sincerity" CD
Fucking A. This comp rules, a who's who of up and coming and established punk rock from here and Japan,I'll list a few and y'all will know exactly what you're getting: TOMMY & THE TERRORS, the BOILS, HUDSON FALCONS, VIRUS, KRAYS, SIXER and more from the USA as well as some rippers less familiar to me from Japan like STRONG BLOSSOM, CRANKED, TERMINAL, ASTRO BABY and more. It's all in or around streetpunk territory and all but a couple of the 23 tracks are keepers. The only downside is that there isn't much info other than band addresses, but I strongly recommend hunting this down to find out what's happening in the spiky punk rock scene here and in the land of the rising sun. (TB)
(www.interference-records.com)

V/A - "Rip Off, the Singles: Second Strike" LP
This LP contains six out-of-print Rip Off 45s from the 1995-'96 era, including: the RIP OFFS, the MOTARDS, the REGISTRATORS, the STIPJES, LOLI & THE CHONES, and the PROBLEMATICS. Each of these records smoked five years ago and they still smoke today. If you're not familiar with Rip Off , then you should make yourself an informed and educated punk consumer and get familiar with the Rip Off label. Like 'em or not, Rip Off is the quintessential, lo-fi, snotty, garage rock punk label. So it's simple, if you missed out on this back then, get it now. Alright, you got it? Good. (AS)
(Rip Off, www.ripoffrecords.org)

V/A - "Speciarity Troop" CD
Here's a compilation of Japanese punk rock along with some experimental stuff. Good tunes from EXPLOSION SACK, DEGENERATE, INDEX, PLASTIC NINE, and RED BACTERIA VACUUM but you have to sift through some pretty awful stuff to get to anything good. (SR)
(1-2-4 Komagawa Higasisumiyosi-ku, Osaka city, 546-0043, JAPAN)

V/A - "We Will Answer With Questions" CD
A compilation that covers more of the mainstream post-hardcore and/or math-rock tip. What once could have come out on Ebullition Records ten years ago is now just screamy bullshit that has been watered down and commodified for college kids. THRICE is a good example of this. I didn't like most of this with the exception of AS HOPE DIES and the PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER (cool name). I have a good feeling that I am going to see a few of these bands on Revelation or Equal Vision Records in the near future. I figure that's what most of these guys are going for. (CC)
(This Guy, PO Box 25725, Los Angeles, CA 90025)



OK, just one little note to the demo makers this time around. *I am not a guy.* Quit writing to Mr. Yanke or I'll send your demos to my dad. He's cool, but not cool enough to do good reviews. Consider yourself warned.

AMPERE has great tight energetic hardcore down, with feeling! They've got the breaking it down slower dark moody parts and their screaming pain vocalist is icing on the cake of despair. Yep, emo hardcore, done well by experts. ($3 ppd. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. 82 Montague Rd., Amherst, MA 01002.)

The **AUDIO RAPISTS** aren't as dumb as their name would lead you to believe. They're good simple snotty "fuck you" punk, but not the easy target "anti pc" way. They play fast, with some slower parts to let you catch your breath. Nothing flashy, but who needs gimmicks when you've got spirit? ($3. 12 song CD, lyrics included. 1416 Lincoln Woods Dr., Baltimore, MD 21228.)

BACKSTORY is History Lesson Part Three. Dale Stewart, of the influential CAPITOL PUNISHMENT, has this cover band that demonstrates the passion and energy of punk, and where it came from, all the way from a LINK WRAY song, through the SONICS and the STOOGES, then some first wave New Yorkers, the NY DOLLS, and then songs by people who no one argues with you when you call 'em punks, DEAD BOYS, HEARTBREAKERS, and SID. I'm not much for cover bands, but this is great, rolling out examples and playing them with heart. Hopefully there's a Backstory part 2 in the works. (11 song CD, no lyrics included. 1571 N. Glenn Ave., Fresno, CA 93728.)

The **CARPETBAGGERS** first song is a slow rocker number, but then for the rest of the demo, they mostly stick to the early energetic days of hardcore. Half-shouting half-singing vocalist over punk that is fast but not slick, with traditional hooks like the thrash part mosh part, the driving rhythm section, the guitar that has those super short fills, what I like to call BLACK FLAG moments. But then they have the song "Just Another Bitch" and, although it has cool meltdown parts to it, it is, shall we say problematic for me. Terrible note to end the tape on for me, but maybe it won't bother you. (2 37-cent stamps, or $1. 9 song cassette, lyrics included, except for the dumb song about bitches. 1311 Misty Ridge Ct., Apopka, FL 32712.)

COFFEE SHOWER plays some of the fastest pop punk I've ever heard, but it's pretty slick with a real singing singer guy who hits crazy notes that you never hear in punk, which is impressive. Standard dude wo-wo back up vocals. There's a lot of mention in their "packet" about how they are unsigned, which makes me suspicious... It is not the role of *MRR* to be your stepping stone. (5 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 171, 67100, L'Aquila, Italy.)

BRYAN DUNAWAY and his acoustic guitar play songs that are usually catchy, sometimes clever, and topical. It's straightforward, with added effects on the vocals sometimes. The songs are about his daily life and friends, and the things that piss him off. ($5 ppd. 31 song CD, no lyrics included. 1357 Macton Rd., Street, Maryland 21154.)

DP OR NOT DP #4 is a massive comp of bands from The Netherlands ranging from poppy snotty punk (the APERS) sweeter poppy punk (the LULABELLES and NIRC), solid punk with a bit of metal (REBOUND 2.15), solid punk with a bit more garage rock (the DRUGS) plain ol' good ol' early style danceable punk (BAMBIX and THE SHAGGABLE SLUTS) straight forward hardcore (ANTIDOTE, KRUSH, DANDARE, and NO BUTT NO HOLE) a mix of hardcore pacing and early punk rock playfulness (HAECKEFLOSSE), darker more emo hardcore (NBP and LOS ASESINOS DE LA SUPERFICIALIDAD). Sorry these are such stereotypes, but I'm just trying to convey that this is a good snapshot with wide variety of bands represented. Most of the bands have two songs on the comp, and the sound quality stays consistent through out. This is highly recommended. ($5 or 4.5 Euro. 39 song CD, lyrics for about half the comp. Wilco DP, Houtensewetering 19, 3991LJ Houten, The Netherlands.)

FOXHOLE is from THE HATED school, although they have a couple of songs that are bouncier, more YOUNG PIONEERS-ish, and a few where they bust into harder faster territory. They have a crooning vocalist, but sometimes a screamer comes into the mix. ($3 ppd. 10 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 680, Conneaut Lake, PA 16316-0680.)

THE HITCH is complex and tight, like NO MEANS NO, but with more of a Friday night cathartic rocking out edge to them. The vocals are guttural sung style, hard rock crooning. I really love this band, and I recommend seeing them live, too! (4 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 4154, Arcata, CA 95518.)

INTENSE YOUTH is a thrashy and lo-fi hardcore band, with melody and structure under the screams that are slightly annunciated so you can understand the lyrics pretty well for hardcore. ($3 or trade. 7 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 10223, Pittsburgh, PA 15232.)

LASTRICK spent some time at the BAD RELIGION school of melodic hardcore, although these guys mix that well with speed and tempo variations of modern hardcore. The vocals are shouted

more than sung. (6 song CD, lyrics included. Fernandez de los Rion, 88, 5o lzda, esc. lzda, 28015, Madrid, Spain.)

THE MAY THEORY play slow and poppy, the sad "soundtrack to a heartbreak" kind of pop. The singer guy is high pitched, and really singing. They mix it up a tad, but mostly stick to the one thing. ($4 ppd. 9 song CD, no lyrics included. 5408 Fremont Ave. N., Brooklyn Center, MN 55430.)

MIDNIGHT CREEPS play pretty straightforward slow to midtempo rock/punk that has a woman who changes singing styles in the middle of the songs, ranging from deep low moaning stuff, to L7 not quite growling, to late 70s more speaking style. It's a live recording. (7 song CD, no lyric sheet. PO Box 344, Mansfield, MA 02048-0344.)

THE PAC-MEN make me want to move! It's fast, but there's more going on then just the fast pace. What? Well, great guitar sound, the rhythm section is strong and interesting, and the vocals are tough, mostly yelling, but not macho. It's like they're not going to take shit, but they don't have to beat you up to prove it. (11 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 4468, Danbury, CT 06813-4468.)

PROTEST STAGNATION play a medley of the newer hardcore styles, fast and lots of changes with a punctuating guitar and good loud drums. It's on the dark side, with guttural female vocals. Another great recording by Mike Stanioch. ($3. 8 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 2353, Portland, OR 97208)

REAPERS SCYTHE is rockin'! They have massive amounts of energy, and play tougher, and faster (at an almost thrash tempo) and more badass than your usual lo-fi garage rockers. They mix it up a little with slow parts, but very rarely. ($5 US, $6 world, ppd. 10 song CD, lyrics included. 1724 E. Penny Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282.)

THE RESIDUALS still play great Texas hardcore like the early days, but this seems faster paced and with more guttural shouting than their earlier stuff. There is also a move to a thicker guitar sound on this recording. Still, though, totally great. (11 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 150206, Dallas, TX 75315-0206.)

SCUNNERED is a split personality band, sometimes straightforward tight and catchy fast punk with kick ass bass lines and then sometimes they're like CULTURE SHOCK with a bigger panorama of vision, going more towards the straightforward saxophone parts mixed with tougher punk. The singer has a speaker/shouter mix to his vocals. (7 pounds, English, post paid. 9 song CD, lyrics included. 8 Allison ST., Govanmill, Glasgow G42 8NN, Scotland, UK.)

SEXBOYS have vocals heartfelt and croony going on over a music bed of fast straightforward simple punk rock, but the vocals are louder than the music in some cases, so it makes it a little disjointed. When it matches up it's energetic and sincere. ($1 ppd. 4 song CD, no lyrics included. 2024 105th Ave. NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55437.)

SHORT OF BREATH combine the old thrash energy and taste of melody with the proficiency of speed metal dudes into a tight highly captivating burst of energy. The vocals are from deep down guttural shouts and screams. (9 song cassette, lyrics. PO Box 675, Flagstaff, AZ 86002.)

SICK FITS play early days grimy New York punk. It's midtempo rockaroll turning up the snotty and catchy knobs all the way, guitar solos, and simple rhythms propelling it along. (3 song CD, no lyrics included. 103 Mohill, Box 8033, RR #2, Dunrobin, On K0A 1T0, Canada.)

SOMETHING ABOUT VAMPIRES AND SLUTS has the slow pace rock base and vocal style of JAYNE COUNTY but the vocals are not as featured in the mix as hers were. This also has a pinch more of THE CRAMPS style, in the guitars, and the pace picks up later in the demo. ($3 ppd. 3 song CD, no lyrics included. 700 G Seaboard St. Myrtle Beach, SC 29577.)

SOURCE AND ROOT has the sensibility of FILTH, but with way more metal moments, double bass drum petal and darker, slower intros going on. They have lots of vocals going, seemingly split evenly between male rumble and female screaming. (5 song cassette, lyrics included. 907 Ridgefield Rd., Wilton, CT 06897.)

THREE PRONG OUTLET is of the Mutant Pop school of slickly produced 3 minute saccharine pop punk songs with upfront snotty vocals. (2 CDs, one with 17 songs, one with 13, no lyrics included for either. 1415 Hilton Terrace, Baltimore, MD 21228.)

TO HELL AND BACK play punk that's influenced by hard rock, crunchy and kind of raunchy, especially in the vocals, and the guitar solos are present, but aren't blazing mile-a-minute style. They just plain rock, head banging energy and arms around your friends, cathartic Friday night music. (5 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 2263, ESP Stn., Albany, NY 12220-0263.)

VISCOUS ELVIS CYST take a phrase, go down to the basement, and write a song about it with all sorts of screeching tweeting keyboard tones. Sometimes they do remixes with a drum machine. ($3 ppd. 10 song cassette, no lyrics included. 51692 Timberline Tr. E., Granger, IN 46530.)

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v/a -Expression vol. 2- CD + Zine $8
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v/a -Expression vol. 1- CD + Zine $8
(Teenie Cheetahs, Sweet JAP, Pay Channel, Royal Fingers, Lottie Collins, TV Idols, Pebbles, Rockin' Enocky, Golden Arms, Das Boot, and more.)

v/a -School Is Out- CD $10
(Estrella 20/20, Mach Kung Fu, Fifi the Mach 3, Havenot's, Switch Trout, Gasoline, and more.)

other labels

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Radio Shanghai -Huv I the Right?- 7" $4
Teengenerate -Live at Shelter- CD $13
The Havenot's -I Hate Music Star!!- CDEP $7
The Gimmies -Auto Shut-off...- CD $12
Smugglers/Mach Pelican split 7" $4
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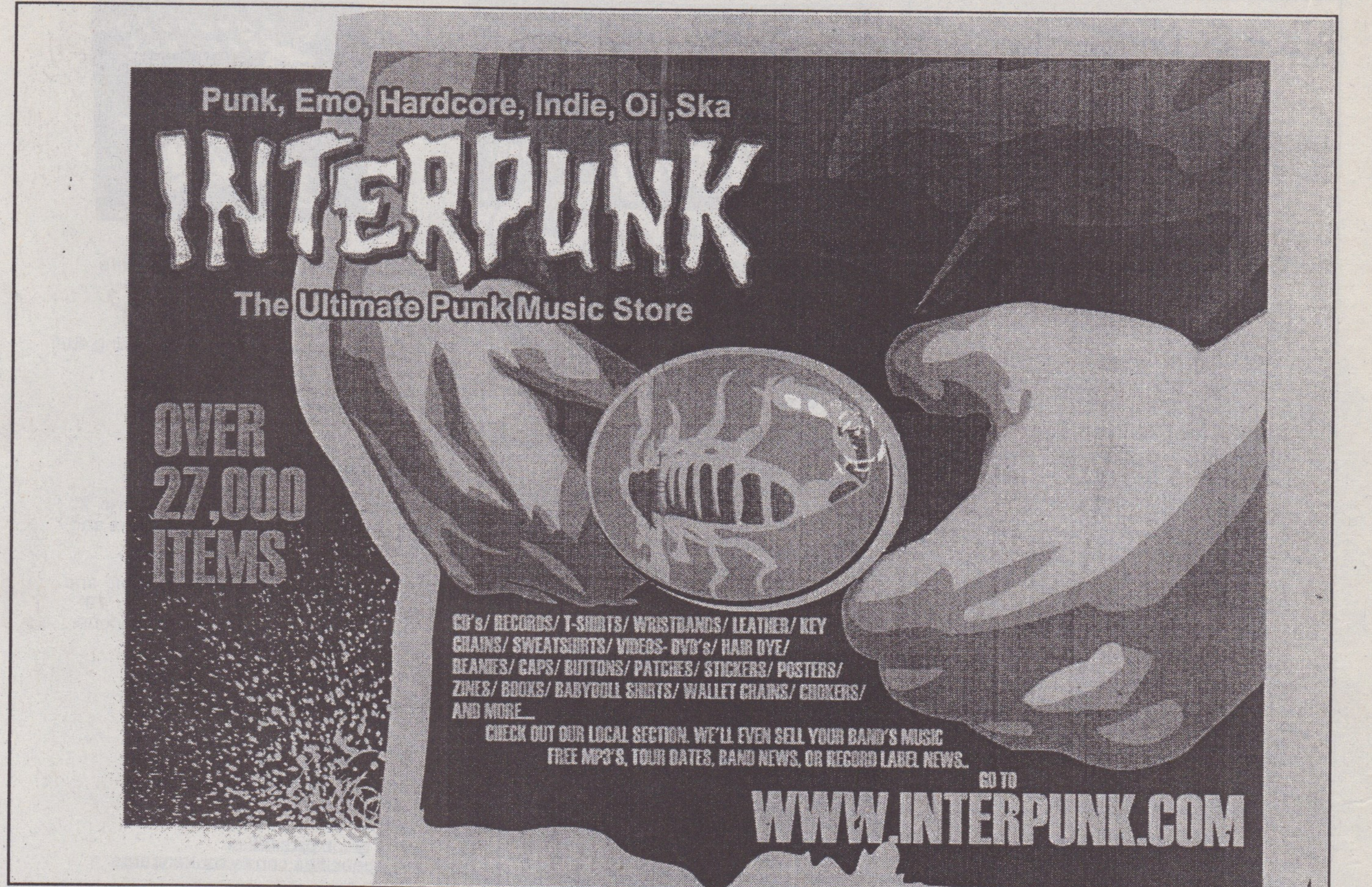

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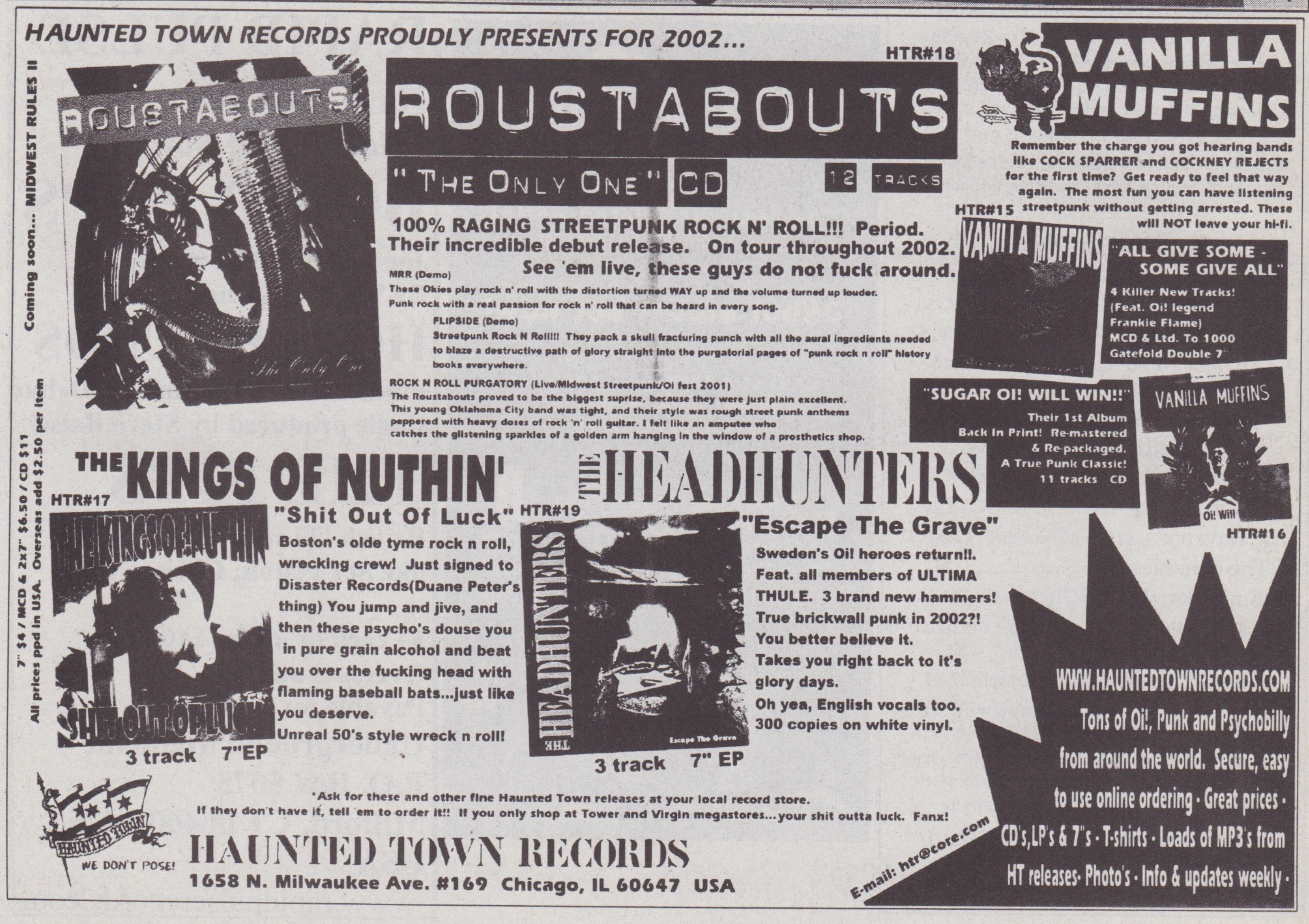

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ROCK N ROLL PURGATORY (Live/Midwest Streetpunk/Oi fest 2001)
The Roustabouts proved to be the biggest suprise, because they were just plain excellent. This young Oklahoma City band was tight, and their style was rough street punk anthems peppered with heavy doses of rock 'n' roll guitar. I felt like an amputee who catches the glistening sparkles of a golden arm hanging in the window of a prosthetics shop.
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Remember the charge you got hearing bands like COCK SPARRER and COCKNEY REJECTS for the first time? Get ready to feel that way again. The most fun you can have listening streetpunk without getting arrested. These will NOT leave your hi-fi.
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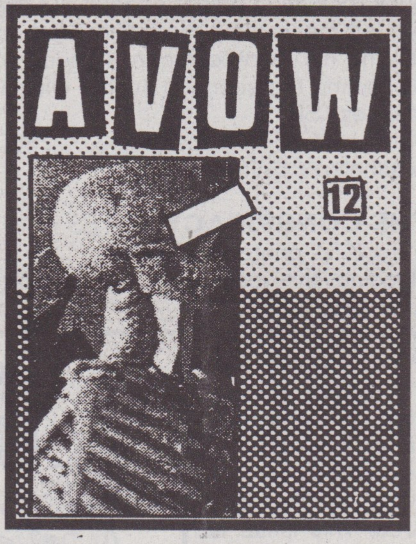
ZINES

Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (CB) Chanel Bowman, (KC) Karoline Collins, (BD) Ben Ditch, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (GF) Gardner Fusuhara, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (NN) Nellie Nelson, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ANTAGONISM #5 / free
4 x 5.5 - copied - 22 pages
Everyone's got a take on September 11 and even the punks found a way to Xerox and print their reactions. This is an Australian kid's reaction to the revolution he sees occurring in the world today, a response elicited by September 11. He explores the connection between how larger forces effect our lives. Many anti-technology and anti-capitalist rants. I liked the comics juxtaposed within his mini-essays. Thanks Vicki. (KH)
PO Box 444 / Wollong NSW 2500 / Australia
activelittleminds@yahoo.com

ANTIPATHY #8 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 140 pgs
A few years ago I read an earlier issue of *Antipathy*, I found myself irritated and impressed by the critical voice carried throughout the writing. Mike's antipathy for liberals, activists, and middle class brats was entertaining. Throughout though, ran a stream of arrogance that left me irritated. So when his newest issue came in, I decided to accept the challenge and review it myself. To begin with, this is one fucking thick zine crammed with tons of writing, so by volume alone, this zine is worth checking out. The content though isn't as easy to evaluate. As in the previous issue I read, the thick stream of macho arrogance makes for some difficult reading. His critical eye is cast towards the same familiar targets, anarchists, ecologists, punks, and travelers, all circles that are well deserving of criticism. But reading through these writings, one comes to the conclusion that Mike likes himself very much and thinks he is the only person making any kind of actual movement towards social change, is the only one living a pure revolutionary lifestyle, and is the only one with the correct analysis. The sort of self aggrandizing, self important, and self righteousness that he brings to his zine detracts greatly from his sometimes very keen insights into the weaker side of the "activist" world. The final nail in the coffin though, is the "get some land" writing. After spending some time on land purchased in Oregon, Mike shares his experiences and points out where things fell apart. The language used is similar to other, "back to the landers"



who talk of "getting (taking) land," and getting back to what's simple," or the "real way to live". Running throughout is a theme of colonialism and "land grab" that serves as one of the salient features of whiteness. The ennobling of living off of the land, and the belief that it's the only way to live smacks of a settler mind set. When included with stories of traveling through Mexico, and his numerous sexual adventures, it's difficult to not feel put off, especially when he explains how revolutionary rainbow gatherings are! It would be easy to write off his zine as just another piece of crap, but it's not. It's extremely well written and provocative. Unlike many zines, it is difficult not to feel a reaction of some sort after reading this. If the intention is to make the reader feel antipathy towards the writer then this zine is a success. Challenging but not always in a good way, this zine is almost always worth the read, even if you don't like what it has to say. (CR)
PO Box 11703 / Eugene, OR 97440

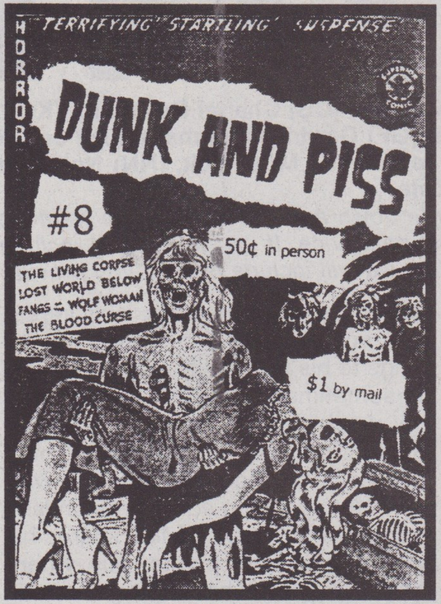
AVOW #12 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
I'm going to go on record and say that *Avow* is the first zine I've ever reviewed that made me tear up while reading it. I didn't feel this way because it's sad or depressing (although the story of Uncle Harold was heartwrenching) but because there were so many parts that just hit so close to home. Tales of friendship and drunken antics, the overwhelming excitement of getting the very first *BYOFL* and reaching out to the amazing network of contacts it provided (as well as devouring every issue of *MRR*), having the best of intentions but wind up doing the worst of deeds, trying to get your house mates to shut up at 2 am without looking like a party pooper, the redemption of taco boy, cat wrestling and (unfortunately) bird killing, remembrance of moments, disembodied voices on the radio at night, and how hope can just flood right through when you least expect it. Of course, I'm just highlighting the bits and pieces of wonderful stories that can be found in this issue of *Avow*. You will travel from small town life as a bezitted teenager ready to put out a compilation tape that will put him on the punk rock map to first year art school student super heroes keeping the streets of Seattle safe from the grunge schlong to present day antics laced with a little nostalgia. Keith is an incredible writer, and top notch in the illustration and layout department.

Please order this...it's so fucking full of life! Amazing. (KC)
Keith Rosson / 2410 SE Taylor / Portland, OR 97214
keithrosson@hotmail.com

THE BLUE (LIGHT) COLLAR WORKER #4 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 48 pgs
If you ever wanted to know what it would be like to work at K-Mart, here's your connection. Like many inside guides to depressing jobs, this one's full of depressed co-workers, ineffective middle managers, and terrible corporate culture. It's a sad world for we who have or continue to toil for these brutes, the humor that Jeremy injects into his tales though may be our only coping mechanism. Reading this lets me look back and remember my days at bad corporate chain restaurants. Bummer. (CR)
PO Box 15988 / Tampa, FL 33684

BUSCA Y DESTRUYE #3 / 3,6 Euros
8.5 x 11.75 - printed - 52 pgs - Spanish
This new glossy-covered mag from Spain includes a 30-CD sampler, one of those pay-to-play deals which tend to bore me to tears but still contain a winner or two. I enjoyed the zine itself much better: there's a pull-out centerfold poster of Spanish 80s punk band Eskorbuto to accompany a well compiled history of same, and a spread of old flyers, which always look cool (though the scan job doesn't do them any favors). The rest of the musical coverage is a wide range from skate punk, ska, to grindcore, to the ubiquitous middle-of-the-road oi. Also included is a biography of Slapshot and a handful of interviews. Though this follows the usually tedious format of the larger Euro rock zine, *Busca* still manages to feel like a fanzine. (AC)
Busca Y Destruye Zine / Apdo 1140 / 28800 Alcala de Henares / Madrid / Spain
buscaydestruye@terra.es

CONNECTION #1 / donation or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Fueled by inspiration from sXe, juggling, and zines, editor Johan puts out his first zine. Useful tips for the beginning juggler, including how to make your own balls, average interview with band Zegota, and a few contributor articles are coupled with reviews and poetry. I got caught up in the article on the future direction of straight-edge. It seemed to be written for a Sociology class, with language and terminology



directed at an audience unfamiliar with punk rock and straight-edge. It put me off, left me wanting the author, Jan, to tell me his favorite record instead of dissecting the scene in such a clinical manner. (SD)
Johan / Caputsteenstraat 3 / 2800 Mechelen / Belgium

THE CONSPIRACY #1 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 100 pgs
Reading the incredibly positive attitude and spirit of overseas punk kids makes me feel like my bitter, cynical attitude is only possible because of how good I have it living in the Bay Area. This issue is the "women's issue" and tends towards a liberal asking of the question "what is it like to be a woman?" That feels creepy, but otherwise the energy of this zine inspires. (AR)
Butch and Dangie Regalia / PO Box 3900 / CPO Manilla 1000 / Philippines

DUNK & PISS #8 / $1
4 x 5 1/2 - copied - 70 pgs
Conveniently sized to fit in one's back pocket, *Dunk & Piss* is an oft amusing, sometimes scarifying, and occasionally thought-provoking glimpse into one punk's mental landscape—have a look, it's fun! Scrawled comics, high-school complaints, punk zine news, and some pointed commentary about digging through old folks' trash, volleyball violence, Pink Floyd and how hard they suck, "bathroom thoughts," and more—written with a real appreciation for the absurd and a neat control of the English language. *Dunk & Piss:* two words worth remembering, for obvious reasons. (JH)
11 Alger Dr. / Rochester, NY 14624

EATING SENSIBLY #? / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 10 pgs
Punk rockers of all stripes have diverse relationships with their foods and diets, whether it's the crusty cultivating scurvy, curled up in the corner with a bottle of homemade beer, or the vegan who obsessively reads every single label at the organic market, or the cynic who runs to the meat counter to piss off his "PC" friends. What very often is not addressed are the emotional aspects of this relationship, and what they mean. *Eating Sensibly* is a project born of love and passion for "eating sensibly"—nine dense pages of very, very, very small type (plus one full-page comic about the phenomenon of the "delusion dessert") on the subject of nutrition, eating, and the healthy diet, but it's also an attempt to address our different psychic investments in food and eating. Toward this end, Julie compiles her writing on food and eating here in a series of essays, quips, and reviews in her pursuit of a sensible eating stratagem, pondering our longing for addictive foods, the function of food as "comfort," pleasures and eating, etc., in ways which highlight the psychological dimensions of our relationships to food and our bodies. This zine is a meticulous but friendly investigation crammed with facts, figures, and a witty (and thoughtful) personality. (MN)

JS / PO Box 190 / Philomath, OR / 97370

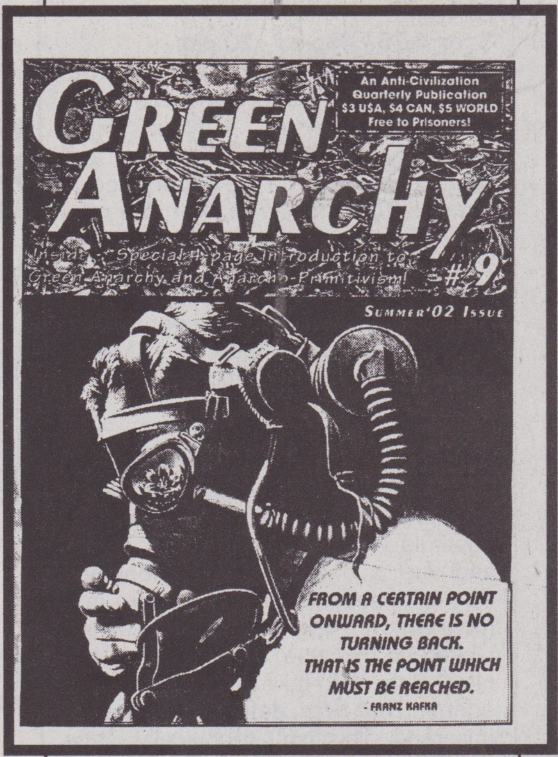
ED FROM FLORIDA Trade or stamps
5.5 x 4.5 - copied - 24 pgs
This short memorial zine for a friend

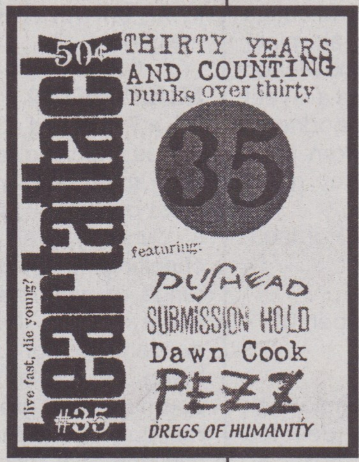
was touching and depressing, a reminder of all the people who get stuck and don't make it. It shows well, the shock and difficulty of losing a friend, even if you'd lost them before they died. (CR)
PO Box 15988 / Tampa, FL 33684

ESCAPE FROM WORCESTER #1 / Free
4.5 x 6 - copied - 8 pgs
Oh so short, oh so good! *Escape from Worcester* is a quick little journey into the life of a 27 year old leaving college life and friends behind (Worcester, MA) and returning to Mom's house / hometown (Hartford, CT) for some introspection. Excellent writing style...there are only six pages of text and yet I feel as though I've read much, much more. The best parts of *Escape from Worcester* (for me, anyway) are the author finding that although the friends may be in Worcester, the heart belongs in Hartford, and that it's great to be able to conduct an archeological dig on yourself (you never know what you'll find or what your parents will keep). Keep up the great work, I can't wait to see the next issue! It says free on the cover, but I'd send at least a stamp or two. And just for the record, I've never used the word "Worcester" this much in my life! (KC)
J Schaefer / 10 Barry Lane / Windsor, CT 06095
escapefromworcester@hotmail.com

(EX)COMMUNICATION #1 / $1
8.5 x 11 - printed - 44 pgs
This is an all interview fanzine. Within these 44 pages you will find interviews with Anti Flag, The Travoltas, Billy Music and The River City Rebels, to name but a few. Since the only band I knew out of all the bands interviewed was Anti Flag, I cant really say I have much of an opinion of this zine. I'm sure though, that if you like any of these bands you will find *(Ex)Communication* very interesting.(BD)
Scissor Press / PO Box 206512 / New Haven, CT / 06520

FOOD GEEK #5 / $1
I, um, digested this issue at our weekly donut night in Albany, circa 3 am. While the punks played Scrabble at the next table, I accompanied editor Carrie on a culinary voyage to China. This trip, while it made for a good read, seemed tragically devoid of delights. That's what you get for taking a tour bus, some might say. *Food Geek* is always enlivened with Carrie's illustrations and recipes for unconventional concoctions like potato burritos. The Colcannon recipe—mostly cabbage and potato—sounds delicious and might be my next experiment in comfort food. But what I appreciated most about the many contributed pieces was their variety. Far from feeling like a tour guide, this zine represents a range of experiences, including ruminations on how to stay physically and emotionally well nourished despite the deprivation of real poverty and how to cook in prison, as well as the more ordinary anecdotes. Chances are, if you're interested in food, you'll enjoy *Food Geek*, and this issue is another good one. (AC)
PO Box 49403 / Los Angeles, CA 90049

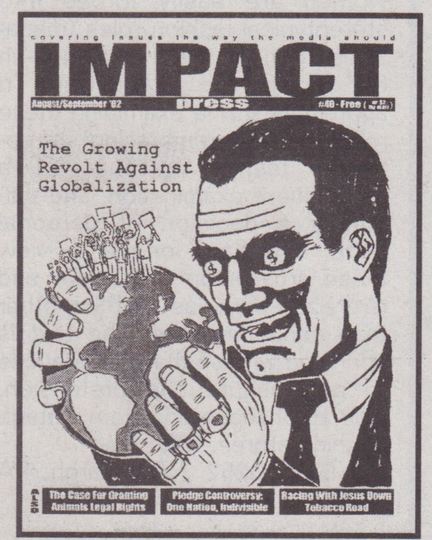




GOOD LITTLE GIRLS #5 / $1
7 x 8.5 - copied - 42 pgs
Good Little Girls is a collaborative periodical put out by a group of women in Pittsburgh. This issue has the theme of style/fashion. Includes Do's and Don'ts written in a style that incorporates quotes from the internet and mainstream musicians, a gothic comic strip (funny), horoscopes, and a shitload of ads for local clothing shops and cafes. There is an article that states a few of the reasons why "we" as women are easily forced into stereotypical fashion roles (magazines, gender roles ingrained in our society, etc.). And while I'd appreciate a zine examining these roles and then embracing stereotypical fashion because of a recognition, examination, and ultimately a decision of personal taste, it is hard for me to view these articles on underwear and oversized pants as anything other than pandering when the text is sprinkled with so many references to pop culture and pretension, plus all of those ads from vintage clothing stores. (SD)
PO Box 10252 / Pittsburgh, PA 15232

GREEN ANARCHY #9 / $3
12 x 16 - printed - 28 pgs
Immediately after this issue was released the *Washington Post* picked up on the fact that #8 had an article written by Ted Kazinski that should guarantee readership (ever more) by the feds of this anti-civilization publication. This issue has a couple of editorial responses to Ted that are well placed. There is a large centerfold/insert that provides an introduction to *Green Anarchy* and Anarcho-Primitivism that is well worth reading, debating, and criticizing. The editorial to this issue includes a series of vaguely placed criticisms to an invisible group of people (who are practicing an anarchist identity politics) that is sure to provide a sectarian fanning of flames as great as the Bookchin's "*Lifestyle Anarchism or Social Anarchism*". (AR)
PO Box 11331 / Eugene OR 97440

HEARTATTACK # 35 / 50¢
8.5 x 11 - printed - 92 pgs
Punks over thirty. What is their warped view of reality? This month's Heartattack is here to let you know with a series of columns focusing on growing older and still being involved in the punk / hardcore scene. Also in this issue you will find interviews with Pushead, Submission Hold, Pezz, and more. Plus the regular columns and articles you've come to expect from this publication. (BD)
PO Box 848 / Goleta, CA / 93116

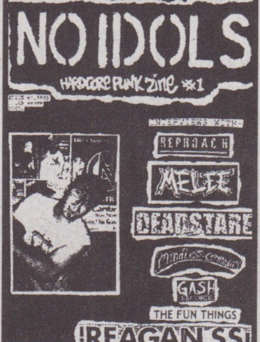


ICING #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
How many days have I waken up and asked myself, why aren't there any zines that cover both hockey *and* hockey. Well maybe I never thought that before, but clearly Scout has, and within these pages, she fills a decades long deficit of winter sports and baked goods. Stories of drinking at minor league hockey games sandwiched between cake recipes provide a sweet treat. For an extra slice of goodness, there's an article by Matt from *Cool Beans!* about the best hockey game ever. Yummy! (CR)
950 Lloyd Center / Box 31 / Portland, OR 97232

IMPACT PRESS September 02 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 64 pgs
This is a consistent liberal indie-rock (post-punk) magazine that devotes most of its page space to "political" essays along the lines of "The Case for Granting Animals Legal Rights" and "Organic Farming: A Realistic Alternative." While the need for such crap evades my understanding, I can imagine that for people of Orlando FL this is pretty "edgy" stuff. (AR)
PMB 361 10151 University Blvd / Orlando, FL 32817

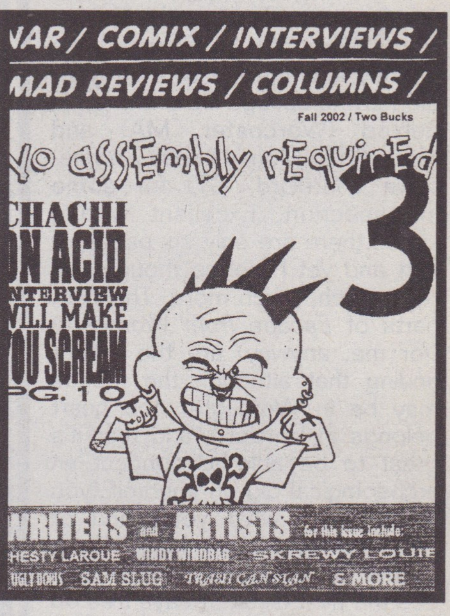
KEEPSCHTUMM #3 / £1.50 UK / $3 world
8.5 x 5.75 - copied - 20 pgs
KEEPSCHTUMM provides us with brief but decent interviews with such anarcho-punks as Citizen Fish, Academy Morticians, Zounds, and plus a brief piece on the importance of Omega Tribe *Make Tea, Not War* reissue. Decent enough, but I kind of wish the interviews were a little more in depth, or at least those being being interviewed would have spent more time answering the questions. (MT)
33 Henry Taylor St / Fflint Fflintshire/ Wales CH6 5PP / UK

MONKEYS IN THE SUN #1 / $2
5.5 x 7 - copied - 57 pages
This is a story of a punk rock girl's past glory days. Her name is Emma and she is obsessed with monkeys. She is obsessed so much, there is a monkey on every page. When I first picked up this zine, I couldn't help but play with the fake fur around it's edges. That was definitely a plus to this read. This isn't technically issue number one, due to its 'one of a kind' establishment. Emma talks about her past punk rock days, up to summer of 2001. When I first started to read this zine, I couldn't help but feel a new mother/wife's middle life crisis plea in a copied format. (KH)
27 Sovereign Dr Botley / Southampton Hants S030 2SR / UK
little_emwatson@hotmail.com



MULTIKID #2 / $1
5.5 x 7 - copied - 32 pgs
This is a fucking rad zine that may not be the most punk of all time but is certainly well worth checking out. A diverse range of writers writing about working for condescending non-profits, being Latino in Texas, Guatemalan Journeys, and growing up Korean. No real connecting theme but real honest and personal reflections without a lot of pretension or cold analysis. Excellent in many ways. (CR)
PO Box 414 / Berkeley, CA 94701
multikid@mail.com

NO ASSEMBLY REQUIRED #3 / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 40 pgs
"CAUTION: MAY CONTAIN BAD TASTE" was written on the letter that came with this zine, and I can't say it isn't true. But that doesn't mean that it's bad—at times I grimaced (reading articles like "How to Be a Ho"), but more often I was laughing out loud.



There is some standard zine fare here (show reviews, interviews, etc.) but the majority of the pages are filled with irreverent, sometimes confusing, always weird jokes. It seems like some of these may be inside jokes within this Canada crew and I'm missing out on something, but fuck, it's still funny. After all, they have a comic called "The Cat in the Hat Visits the Projects," and they put Calvin (minus Hobbes) on their cover. How cool is that? (CJ)
NAR / Suite #248 / 16-1375 Southdown Rd / Mississauga, ON L5J 2Z1 / Canada

NOF-NOF #1 / $1.50
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
Nof-Nof, or *No Fame No Fortune*, is a short collection of "relatively fictitious" pieces. Chloe has a keen sense for mood; her vignettes are mostly psychological interiors, and her first story is her most imaginative and accomplished, subtly weighing the tensions between passionate pursuits (here located in her identification with

scientist Marie Curie) and the everyday chores that make up women's invisible work (child-rearing, cooking). There are shades of Janet Kauffmann, Emily Watson, and a little Jeanette Winterson here. Her prose is still a bit underdeveloped—some of her thoughts and phrases are stretched too thin, or not pursued far enough—and the zine is a little thin, but I do hope she keeps writing (and makes the white space between lines of typewritten text smaller). (MN)
Nof-Nof / 19 Gorton St / Providence, RI 02906

NO IDOLS #1 / $2 or trade
8.5 x 11 - copied - 26 pgs
I really liked this zine, I mean it has all the good elements of a music zine without any of the crap that would take it down the highway to sucksville. Well done cut and paste layout, nice graphics, good interviews (Reagan SS, Melee, Reproach, Deadstare, etc), well done reviews, and hell there is even a punk rock crossword puzzle. Two thumbs up! (MT)
4/35 Chelsea Ave / Broadbeach Qld / 4218 Australia

OX #47 / $ 7
11 x 8 - printed - 156 pgs - German
Yep, this zine is huge with tons and tons of punk rock. If you can read the language, or interested in the German scene this is a place to be. There are interviews with the bands Streetwalkin Cheetas, Girls vs. Boys. Dillinger 4, Gluecifer, Sonic Youth and plenty more. There are lots of columns, movie, book, zine, and show reviews.There are zillions of new record/CD reviews, and plenty of ads. My only beef, why all the photos of bands with members smoking cigarettes? Lame! And of course the package would not be complete without the complimentary CD sampler which features Attaque 77, Hammerhai, ZSK, Shakin Nasties and others. (HH)
PO Box 102225 / 42766 Haan / Germany
www.ox-fanzine.de

THE PASSION DRIVEN PROJECT! #1 / $4
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 64 pgs
This is definitely a project driven by passion—a DIY hardcore and queer-positive fanzine packing (*ahem!*) a sense of humor and commitment. The look of the zine is unimaginative (straight computer work with few images) but the writing is both enthusiastic about hardcore and also critically engaged in examining its blind spots and absences around gender and sexuality. The bulk of the zine is made up of lengthy interviews with Countdown to Putsch (who discuss everything from new jazz, Emma Goldman, and the politics of hardcore), Chris Colohan (Ruination), Ninja Death Squad and a summer tour diary from Tastes Like Burning, with a smattering of essays and contributions from the likes of Daryl Vocat (he's the only name I recognize, I am so *not* a hardcore devotee). I think that if I went through my zine archive I could count

the number of hardcore queer zines on two hands, so for this reason (more hardcore queer zines, yah!) and more (there is still so much resistance to having these conversations about gender and sexuality) this zine is as necessary as ever. Plus, fifty cents of each issue goes to Open Door Books, a books-to-prisoners project. (MN)
The Passion Driven Project! / 382 Des Muguets / Ste-Therese, Quebec / J7E 5T4 Canada
passiondrivenproject@yahoo.ca

PUNISH...OR BE DAMNED #1 / $1 or 2 stamps
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Dear Flamboloyd Flitzbottom, please consider establishing clear section breaks, white spaces, or some sort of rhetorical pauses within your fanzine, because the one-long rant style is ineffective for conveying your message. It is not that you necessarily have bad or boring things to say, but then again, this reviewer would not know, because she could not discern your point, or in any case she could not force herself to wade through the *long* paragraphs. In thinking, perhaps, of your poor reader, and establishing sections or breaks, you will be able to better organize your reflections on the various topics you address (including aggression, US foreign policy, ecological devastation, genocide, and the sweep of human history) and allow your reader to consider these with more thoughtfulness. Thank you. PS. Your idealization of "pleasant savages" is really problematic. Please check out critiques of modernist art practices of "primitivism" and anthropological critical theorists such as James Clifford. (MN)
POBD / 2 Tinkham Glenn / Wilbraham, MA 01095

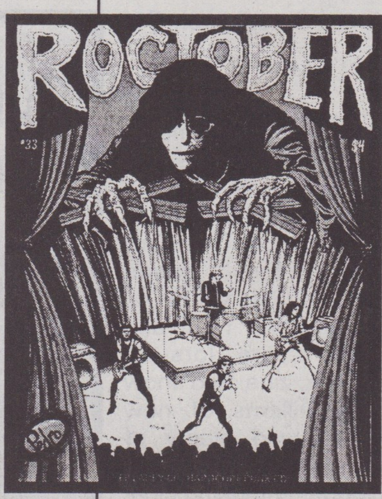
PTBH #10 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
Hidden inside this zine was a note to me, the *MRR* reviewer, asking me to "please be kind" or pass it on to someone else. Boy, they sure don't make punks like they used to! I don't know which of my fellow reviewers was mean to Rex, but I liked this zine a lot. This issue mostly covers a horrific cross country trip from Pensacola to Seattle and is filled with the mainstays of the travel zine genre: betrayal, breakdowns, guest/roommate drama, pondering one's place in the world, etc. There's an occasional metaphorical overreach, but overall the writing was good and the ideas engaging. Give Rex a break and get a copy of this zine. (GZ)
PO Box 30785 / Seattle, WA 98103-0785

RAZOR BLADES AND ANGRY FACES #1 / £1
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 64 pgs
For the punks and skins. Interviewed; Onfile, Partisans, Deadline, Skeptix, Intensive Care. Plus reviews and updates. This looks good and definitely has that skinhead aesthetic. Also has the "return of Oi the column" by Gary Bushnell... Not really sure if that is a good thing or not. (GF)
19a Church St / Wotton Under Edge / Gloucestershire, GL12 7HB / England
razorbladesandangryfaces@hotmail.com

REASON TO BELIEVE # 6 / $3 US, £1.50 World
8.5 x 11 - printed - 80 pgs
Another big kick ass zine from the UK. Interviews with Seeing Red, Brezhnev, Dumbstruck, the STE collective, the JAR collective, pieces on Australian politics starting a food coop, peat harvesting (it's like a... you gotta read it) oh, and how to improve your lousy posture you slouch. Plus lots of short bits on the whole DIY thingy from lotsa different scene folks. Damn, all that *and* it's free in Europe/UK. Use email to find cheaper distro rates for your area... Do it now! (GF)
145-149 Cardigan Rd / Leeds / LS6 1LJ / UK
info@rtbzine.org

REBEL-A-GO-GO #4 / $2 free to prisoners
8.5 x 11 - copied - 60 pgs
A fairly hefty photozine. Copied pretty well. I liked the ones of Limpwrist. There's also Sleater-Kinney DS-13, Bratmobile and many many more. Also some info on photo emulsion silkscreens. The editor brings up the idea of whether the punx can enjoy a photozine from an 'art' perspective or do they just wanna see photos of the bands. I mean, obviously that's gonna vary, and many can do both. The point is; are your photos artistic, or are they just snapshots? This has both. Admit the difference to yourself. There are some real cool shots in here. My advice would be to concentrate on those and also work on a better layout to present them. (GF)
Maggie May / PMB 278 / 6523 California Ave SW / Seattle, WA 98136-1833
maggiemay@bust.com

ROCK 'N' ROLL PURGATORY #8 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 44 pgs
Delirious psychobilly ramblings, swollen pompadours, busted skulls, broken bottles, and full ashtrays. *Rock 'n' Roll Purgatory* bills itself as "writing to please the heathen soul," and questions of religiosity aside, it offers some neat news on greaseball rock 'n' roll combos that might be unfamiliar to some (Speed Crazy, Stepsister, the Philadelphia Experiment, Flathead Mike & the Mercurys), knowledgeable scenesters (Marc Bristol of the long-running *Blue Suede News* mag), and a roundup of recent audio releases, live shows, and books. Clearly the red-headed love-child of a dedicated fan—infectiously enthusiastic. (JH)
342 S Walnut St / Wooster, OH 44691
www.rocknrollpurgatory.com



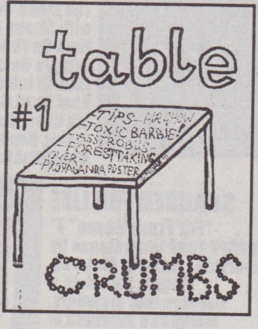
ROCKTOBER #33 / $4
8.5 x 11 - offset - 94 pgs
Always exhaustive and never exhausting, a new issue of *Rocktober* makes the dreariest of weekdays seem like X-Mas (or Halloween). If you've never been exposed to the Chicago "journal of masked rock 'n' roll," you've missed out on some exemplary words on and about Sammy Davis Jr., the significant role of monkeys in rock 'n' roll (it's greater than you'd think), and all manner of obscurities both punk and non-punk. This ish contains features on Southern Fried stand-up comic T. Bubba, 60s songstress Margo Guryan, Handsome Dick Manitoba, Jimmy ("JJ") Walker interviewed by Nardwuar the Human Serviette, New York's Cavestomp festival, and plenty of comics, thoughtful reviews ("this record redefines mediocrity"), and free of charge, a career-spanning freebie CD of early 80s hardcore/jokecore bands fronted by Chicago workhorses the Stepe brothers. All this can be yours with a minimal outlay of cash. (JH)
1507 53rd St #617 / Chicago, IL 60616
www.rocktober.com

SNAKE PIT Anthology II / $3
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 104 pgs
Fuck yeah! This zine is totally rad. Ben chronicles every single day of his life in in a three-panel comic strip, and this anthology compiles a year's worth of these comics, from July of 2001 to this past summer. You'd think that reading about someone going to work, getting drunk, going to parties, then waking up and starting it all over again would get boring and tedious, but for some reason it doesn't. Whenever the mundane cycle starts to settle in, Ben throws in something to keep you interested. There's something about the simplicity of his observations and drawings that's just fucking great. And he even listens to good music. What more could you want? Write to him and get a copy of this zine, or suck at life. (CJ)
Ben White / 2100 Guadalupe #138 / Austin, TX 78705

STARDUMB # 5 / free
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 28 pgs
Stardumb Punk Rock Zine is put out by the Dutch record label Stardumb Records. This issue contains interviews with the Groovie Ghoulies and Tiger Army as well as a fairly informative German scene report, a very positive record review section and several pages of columns including one from *MRR* shit worker Bobby Manic.

Though not entirely my cup of tea this is a pretty well-rounded music zine, and there's a really cool Joey Ramone drawing on the back cover which would make a great poster to boot! (BD)
Stardumb Enterprises / PO Box 21145 / 3001 AC Rotterdam / The Netherlands

TABLE CRUMBS #1 / $1.50 OR $1 plus 2 stamps
7 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Table Crumbs was an interesting read. All cut and paste with mostly handwritten stories. Gotta say that the handwritten stuff was a little too sloppy and hard to read for my taste...which was a shame, because the stories were quite good. Tales of growing up in Poland, as well as good bits on its history and practices, toxic Barbie dolls, cutting on the CrimethInc dumpster divers of privilege, Eastern European political posters (incredible!), and a very frank piece on censorship. Good work. (KC)



Adas Wroblewski / 308 N Prairie #403 / Champaign, IL 61820
czarnybocian@hotmail.com

TEENAGE DEPRESSION #3 / free
5.5 x 7 - copied - 14 pages
This is more of a newsletter than a zine, and they even say that in their letter. Basically, all it had was two interviews, record reviews, and their radio's play list. There isn't any articles or leisure reading. Their radio show seems pretty established with good music. (KH)
1048 4 St NW / Calgary, Alberta T2M2Y9 / Canada
www.cjsw.com

TERRA INFIRMA—VITA OBSCURA #3 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 56 pgs
This is an amusing zine. There is an actual treasure map in the centerfold. There is a rather large piece on the difference between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches in relation to Durkheim's analysis of religion as a crucial source of social solidarity. There is a painful piece on the success of the Cuban revolution for socialism and some content lifted from Crimethinc (appropriate). *Terra Infirma—Vita Obscura* is puzzling but pleasurable. (AR)
709 Middlebury Rd / Webster, NY 14580

TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 15 #2
11 x 17 - printed - 16 pgs
This issue has a great article about RAWA (Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan) and the ways that the idea of "Saving Afghan Women" has been (mis)used by American leftists and liberal feminists as well as the Right. Also worth reading is the interesting exchange about violence vs. non-violence among activists in the Palestinian struggle and the critical response to a call for anti-authoritarian organization based on the idea of race abolition. Not worth reading is the cover story about how Bush knew about 9/11 and let it happen to further his political interests and the interests of imperial capital: not convincing, sorry! (and I think that the argument that one "would only shrink from this conclusion if [one] accepts the myth of American Democracy" is the kind of reasoning that makes the left look plain silly). Also includes articles on the Long Beach police department and a lot of movement press releases disguised as articles. As always, a mixed bag but this issue is definitely worth the price. (GZ)
PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232

VERBICIDE #6 / $3.50
8.5 x 11 - printed - 80 pgs
This zine started out optimistically enough. It promised (and delivered) a variety of creative and political writing pieces, along with an interview of the neckless wonder himself, Henry Rollins. However, I couldn't even get through the first article without being disgusted. The majority of the bands portrayed in this zine are indie rock major label hopefuls masquerading under the guise of DIY ideals. The record reviews are supercilious and misinformed, dismissing almost all the lesser-known bands' records while praising other records' mass appeal. Maybe this is your kind of thing, but it sure isn't for me. Some of the political writing impressed me, but on the whole this zine was tedious and I had to force myself to finish it. (CJ)
Scissor Press / PO Box 206512 / New Haven, CT 06520

VIOLENCE #3 / ?
8.5 x 11 - printed - 60 pgs
What we have here is another 60 pages from these Poles dedicated to the more brutal grind/hardcore end of the punk spectrum. Good interviews with Y, Reaching Forward, Andy from No Comment/Man Is The Bastard, Scholastic Deth, and Yacøpsæ. Think of this as a European version of *Short, Fast, Loud.* (MT)
c/o SMG Records / POB 46 / 21500 Biela Podl / Poland
www.smgrecords.prv.pl

WE WANT THE WORLD AND WE WANT IT ON FIRE #1 / $3 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 60 pgs
Half of *We Want The World And We Want It On Fire* consists of an in depth interview with Greg Bennick of the band Trial. The interview spans from 1999 and is comprehensive and heavy. Greg talks of the events that motivated him to start looking outside of his sheltered world of white boy suburbia; of finding a more common ground to explore the questions of humanity; of how to instigate change. Not sure if this is how all zines are done in Australia, but editor Daniel utilizes a non-traditional layout: turn the zine to 3 o'clock, then open and read. Includes tons of reviews, some poetry, the plight of hardcore in 2002 and an art-crush. (SD)
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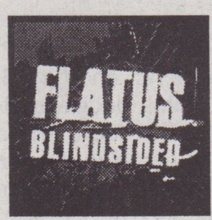

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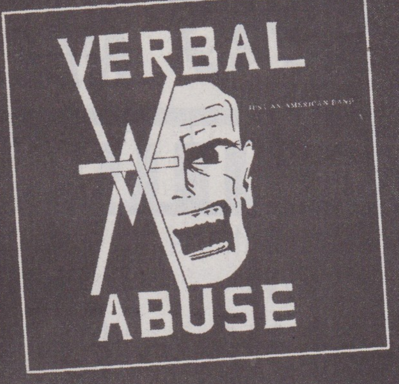

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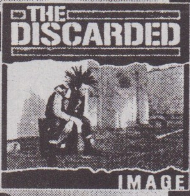

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21 new songs of blistering thrash brutality, no filler. Hammering recording at Mars Studio for the extra kick in the ass. First new LP/CD in over 3 years and best in their history.

V/A TOMORROW WILL BE WORSE VOL. 3

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6 bands, 22 songs on 3 split EP's between U.S. & Japanese powerhouses. A full on energetic hardcore onslaught - an orgy of thrash. With FLAG OF DEMOCRACY, IDOL PUNCH, VIVISICK, BRODY'S MILITIA, STRUCK, and THE FARTZ. *3x7" price the same as an LP.*

HELLNATION

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MUKEKA DI RATO

Acabar Com Voce CD

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ALLERGIC TO WHORES

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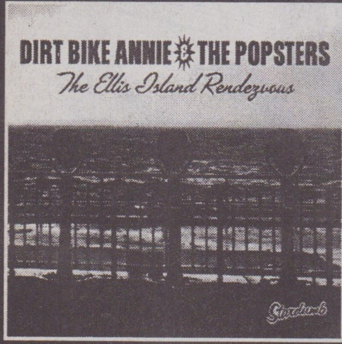

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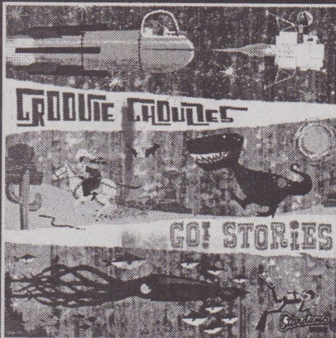

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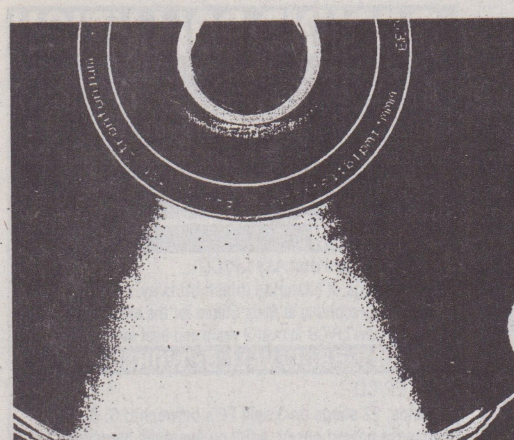

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